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Soft Power and Global Governance with Chinese Characters

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Review

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Soft Power and Global Governance with Chinese Charactersⁱ

Some leading American theorists of China's global role, such as Shambaugh, Nye, Ikenberry, and many others have claimed that China has not managed to develop its soft/attractive power.¹ Since China has not managed to attract the world to its culture, values, and ways, it has not found its place in global governance. Instead, China has become a power that punches below its weight. This article focuses on the empirical generalization, proposed by these American scholars, that China's soft power has failed and that this has resulted in that country's incomplete global engagement. The aim of this article is to show that this generalization is false by first questioning whether China really has failed in its soft power, and, secondly, by showing that the measuring sticks used to prove the incompleteness of China's global role are themselves flawed.

Opinion polls that measure China's image in the world show that while China's popularity was on the rise in the first decade of the new millennium, its star began to decline after that.² Even when China did better at promoting its image, its popularity was of limited use, as its soft power never translated into foreign-policy power, according to Gill and Huang.³ The evidence for China's soft-

¹ G. John Ikenberry, "The Rise of China, the United States, and the Future of the Liberal International Order.," in David L. Shambaugh, Ed., *Tangled Titans: The United States and China* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012); Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); Joseph S. Nye, "Think Again: Soft Power," *Foreign Policy*, February 23, 2006, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/02/22/think_again_soft_power; Joseph S. Nye, "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power," *Foreign Policy*, April 29, 2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/04/29/what_china_and_russia_don_t_get_about_soft_power?wp_login_redirect=0; David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Bruce Stokes, "Asia's View of China – Mostly Wary, but Japan Most of All," *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, 2013, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/08/05/asias-view-of-china-mostly-wary-but-japan-most-of-all/>.

² Young Nam Cho and Jong Ho Jeong, "China's Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects," *Asian Survey* 48, no. 3 (June 1, 2008): 453–72.

³ Bates Gill and Yanzhong Huang, "Sources and Limits of Chinese 'Soft Power,'" *Survival* (00396338) 48, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 17–36.

power failure is solid and consistent: extensive opinion polls, using different methodologies, all end up with the same conclusion. Equally clear is the evidence of China’s meager role and power in global governance projects. China appears unwilling to take its place in operations to regulate the world. Thus, China has failed in her globalization role; it has become a “partial power,”⁴ which cannot lead the world and will not challenge the U.S.’s leadership.

Going against this American mainstream interpretation seems challenging, especially since it has been supported with solid evidence by some of the best experts on global politics and China’s role therein. Yet, it will be suggested in this article that China’s soft-power focus is not directed at attracting other powers to the Chinese way of doing things or Chinese system. This contrasts with the policy of the United States during the Cold War when it sought to convince the world of the virtues of liberal democracy and capitalism and of the vices of totalitarian communism. China’s foreign policy does not seek to persuade other countries of the benefits or superiority of the Chinese system and adopt it in their own domestic affairs, as the United States attempted to do. The reason why the United States (and the Soviet Union) was eager to manipulate opinion so as to make its system the system of choice in other countries was that the world was divided between capitalist and communist states. Then, in a bipolar world, global identity and membership in a global coalition was associated with domestic politics. If soft power is defined as an ability to persuade other states to adopt capitalism or socialism, as was the case during the cold war, then China has failed. However, if soft power is defined as an ability to persuade other powers to do, in world affairs, things that China wants them to do, or would benefit from them so doing, then the jury should wait for further evidence before giving its verdict. The evidence will have to be drawn from an analysis of soft power specific to China’s, not America’s, needs.

⁴ Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*.

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3 The same is true for China's global power strategies. If China had the same strategy and the same
4 power objectives today as those of the United States during the cold war, we could say that China
5 has failed. However, again, China's power strategies are tuned to China's own objectives and
6 China's version of a just international system, not to the objectives and norms that the United States
7 had during its own hegemony, and thus China's global power strategies should not be measured by
8 using an American yardstick. Thus this article suggests that if one looks at China's real objectives,
9 and its attempts to persuade other world powers to act in a way that suits these objectives, it seems
10 clear that China has been more successful with its global power strategies and its soft power than
11 scholars have concluded.
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23 This article will start by criticizing some of the analytical concepts of current American mainstream
24 studies of Chinese power: concepts that have their origins in the historical context of the Cold War,
25 and are derived from a powerful but inappropriate model of cooperation currently being pursued by
26 the USA. By using concepts that are more appropriate to the analysis of global governance and soft
27 power today, the article will claim that Ikenberry's, Nye's, and Shambaugh's analysis of China's
28 approach to the global system is too damning and too biased towards the American worldview.
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38 It must be noted that Chinese global governance and soft power have been theorized from many
39 alternative perspectives, some of which come closer to my critical viewpoint.⁵ The Chinese
40 academic debate about Chinese soft power and global governance in particular has not always been
41 based on the miscontextualized ideas of power of attraction and global governance. However, the
42 focus of this article is on the above mentioned influential and well publicized Anglo-American
43 analyses. It is the mainstream Anglo-American analysis of China's projection of its power on the
44 world stage that will be criticized in this article.
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54 ⁵ For example, Li Mingjiang, Hongyi Lai and Yiyi Lu have approached the concept of soft power from a constructivist
55 point of view and ended up with results that are easier to accept than the conclusions presented by Shambaugh, Nye,
56 and others (Hongyi Lai and Yiyi Lu, *China's Soft Power and International Relations* (Routledge, 2012); Mingjiang Li,
57 "Soft Power: Theory And the Chinese Approach, A Paper Presented at a Seminar on The Rise of China and Its Soft
58 Power." (S. Rajaratnam School Of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, October 18, 2007).
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Theoretical contexts and concepts that guide interpretations of Chinese power

There are two contextualizations in this mainstream analysis of Chinese power that lead to misconceptions. The first miscontextualization arises from seeing the subject of China’s rise through the lens of the previous, American, hegemonic period. The second miscontextualization is simply a product of an uncritical attitude towards partisan American framings of problems of global cooperation. To prove this I will take a short look at the premises of the concept of soft power.

As it was the seminal work by Joseph S. Nye which introduced the concept of soft power to the literature on international relations, it is understandable that the main concepts developed by Nye are still the conventional wisdom. This is why it is possible to trace what I feel is a misunderstanding about Chinese soft power to Nye’s concepts.

The starting point of Nye’s theory of soft power is attractive in its simplicity. It is based on the relational concept of power, as defined by Robert A. Dahl, in which A has power over B if and only if A can make B do something B would not do without A’s intervention.⁶ Nye’s concept of power extends to structural contexts as well, especially when he speaks about the power that defines agendas in social interaction. But the idea of A changing the behavior of B is present even in Nye’s concept of structural power. By defining agendas, A can make B do something. While A’s rewards and penalties (economic and military power) change B’s behavior by creating conditions that change B’s utility calculations, soft power in Nye’s theory is something that uses neither rewards nor penalties, but instead changes the preference calculus by having B adjust its preferences to the liking of A: “Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others.”⁷ In this way soft

⁶ Nye, “What China and Russia Don’t Get About Soft Power”; Robert A. Dahl, “Dahl, Robert A., The Concept of Power , Behavioral Science, 2:3 (1957:July),” *Behavioral Science* 2, no. 3 (1957): 201–15.

⁷ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics*, 5.

power is not based that much on power resources (strength) such as the power to punish (based on military resources) and the power to reward (economic power resources). Soft power is strategic and it draws from discourses outside the user of soft power. These discourses give positive or negative connotations to various characteristics in politics, culture, or economic interaction. For example, if a country cannot avoid the association between its cooperation in development and the discourse of manipulative colonial practices of interference, that country cannot present its cooperation regarding development in a good light. Such a country's soft-power strategies thus fail to make its aid policies look attractive, and it thus fails to influence other countries' attitudes towards its aid.

In some cases, aid, investments, or trade can be used as a "carrot" to change the aid/investment recipient's behavior by rewarding wanted behavior. However, aid, trade, and investments can also be tools of soft power if their purpose is not to reward, but to create a positive image of the donor and thus influence the recipient's attitudes.⁸ Thus when trade, investments or aid have not just rewarded their recipients but have also affected attitudes and preferences, they have been means of soft power. We must also remember that aid, when used as reward to make the recipient do what the donor wants, does not always yield soft-power gains. On the contrary, conditional aid, trade, and investment are often seen as imperialism or hegemonism, which changes the recipient's perception of the donor in a negative way.

The insufficient attention given to ideas concerning structural power in American literature on soft power could be the subject of more critical attention. Actors' changes of preference cannot be understood unless one looks at the mutual constitution of preferences and identities in the structures of world politics. Even if one is interested in whether or not China seeks to change the preferences of countries with which it interacts, understanding how international structures shape identities and

⁸ Hongyi Lai, "Introduction: The Soft Power Concept and the Rising China.," in *Hongyi Lai & Yiyi Lu, Eds., China's Soft Power and International Relations* (Routledge, 2012), 8.

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3 preferences is important in assessing whether or not China's soft-power strategies have been
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5 successful. A might be able to make B do something that B would not do without A's intervention
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7 if, for example, A offered B an opportunity to gain some positive publicity by inviting it to
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9 participate in a peace process, thereby helping in the creation of B's image as a peacemaker, which
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11 might then ensure B's participation in a peace-supporting role in the future, and perhaps even
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13 reduce B's willingness to support or participate in aggression. Here, soft power works through the
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15 structural mechanisms of power, but nevertheless offers A a way of getting B to do what A wants.
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17 This side of the analysis of power is understudied in the mainstream American analysis of Chinese
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19 power, and since the objective of this article is to identify where the American mainstream fails in
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21 its analysis, this article will not go into tracing the role played by the mutual constitution of
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23 identities and policies. Such a venture could be the next step after a critique of the mainstream
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25 American analysis. The interest of this article is to deconstruct, leaving the construction of a better
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27 analysis to the next phase.
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33 In addition to making his theory more structural (and less relational), Nye's soft-power analysis
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35 could be made more sensitive to the social construction of the realities that influence power. The
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37 assumption in current assessments (by Nye, Shambaugh and the Pew Global Attitudes Project
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39 studies) of Chinese soft power is that there are objective realities that can be manipulated by
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41 allocating rewards or imposing penalties, which in turn affect the preferences of those targeted.
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43 Nye's remarks about agenda formation as soft power suggest that it is possible to focus
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45 international attention on different elements in the objective environment that surrounds China, the
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47 U.S., and other international actors. However, as the example of peaceful policies and the identities
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49 of peacemakers already suggests, soft power can articulate interpretations that constitute and create
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51 social realities, which international actors then evaluate, and, in that sense, soft power has many
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53 options that go beyond the "attraction" that scholars of Chinese soft power talk about.
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The fact that our political imagination does not always reach beyond a setting in which a big power exerts soft power by attracting others to its ways, thereby making them follow it, is an example of the effectiveness of American soft power since the second World War . If soft power is seen solely in terms of the ability of a great power to attract other powers to follow its path, the “naturalness” of such a framing justifies the idea that great powers have to lead and attract others to adhere to their political and cultural norms. The U.S. rose to greatness by portraying itself as an anti-colonial alternative to previous intrusive European colonialism, a portrait that appealed to many nations. One might imagine such a power not being interested in attracting others to copy its democracy and culture, and one might think that it would allow others, including developing countries, to develop their own polities and ways of life. But if the natural way of soft power is attraction, then such an option would be unnatural and therefore the U.S. would not be criticized for its charm offensives aimed at persuading other sovereign countries to adopt its ways. The framing of soft power makes the policy of promoting specific political and cultural values, or a specific interpretation of democratic governance natural, and hides the fundamental contradiction such policies imply with respect to the principle of non-interference and respect for the sovereignty of all nations. However, again the absence of an analysis of the social construction of the social structures of international relations in the American analysis of Chinese strategies concerning power can be mentioned but cannot be developed in detail in an article that aims at the deconstruction of some of the contextualizations of the American analysis. The construction of a better theory of Chinese power will have to be the task of the next phase of research on this topic.

A misconceptualized analysis of power

The idea of soft power as the power of “attraction” is historically specific and belongs to the structure of international relations following the Second World War. In that historical bipolar arrangement the overriding feature was a global competition between governments that advocated a world revolution and governments that advocated global capitalism and national democracy. In

such a structure, soft power affected preferences (by means of attraction) regarding communism and capitalism. The greater attraction of capitalism was crucial to the costs of American power politics. Countries that saw communism as destructive were willing allies of the U.S. in the American effort to contain communism. Thus they were doing what the U.S. wanted them to do, and no reward or penalty was needed, or, if they were, less coercion or bribery was required, due to the attraction of the capitalist American way.

However, beyond a historically specific context, soft power can be anything that compels countries to do things that the user of soft power wants them to do. It is important to remember that outside the Cold War context, soft power does not necessarily mean that others want the same things that the exerciser of soft power wants. Quite the contrary, since China currently wants economic development, the logic of the structure of China's cooperation often requires that others must want the exact opposite of what China wants: in order to trade, others must want to buy what China wants to sell. Thus China has a vastly broader range of tools than simple attraction to make others do what it wants.

Opinion polls can be used to identify the kinds of soft power that are suitable for China, but we have to be careful when selecting the kinds of opinions we wish to analyze. Opinions that reveal the benefits to be gained from interacting with China are naturally useful for Chinese interests outside the historical context of the Cold War as China still wants to interact with other countries (especially with those it considers useful for its economy, security, etc.). However, whether people in other countries want Chinese culture, values, art, etc., to be emulated in their own country is irrelevant outside the Cold War context. During the Cold War a liberal democracy was likely to want to act as the United States wanted it to, since the dividing lines of the Cold War ran between the liberal democracies and other polities. However, in the current situation China needs others to accept Chinese values, culture, and visions as Chinese values, culture and visions, but China does not benefit from opinions and attitudes that indicate an interest in choosing the same values, culture,

and visions. Thus, while we can still assess the success of Chinese soft power by looking at opinion polls, we will have to read and interpret them differently to the way in which they have been interpreted by PEW, Shambaugh, Nye, the BBC and Ikenberry.

It is also possible to change countries' preferences in ways other than by simply attracting them: it is possible to change their framing of the premises of international decision making — framing the opportunities, outcomes, strategies and even the identities of the actors in world politics — in a way that leads to behavior that is useful and beneficial for the employer of soft power. However, this article focuses on the direct Chinese influence on the preferences of other regional and global powers rather on influence gained through the manipulation of framings. Yet, instead of accepting concepts that were born in the context of the Cold War, I will examine the kind of soft power that seeks directly to influence preferences in the context of the post-Cold-War world, a context in which China is aiming at something very different from the objectives of the U.S. during the Cold War.

The hegemonic and anti-hegemonic context of power

Theories of hegemonic leadership tend to emphasize the similarities between hegemonic cycles throughout recent history. This is understandable, as the idea of such theories is to draw generalizations from previous hegemonic cycles and apply them as predictions or heuristic tools in the analysis of subsequent hegemonic cycles. The fact that, with just one exception, hegemonic transitions have been violent justifies John Mearsheimer's prediction of the inevitable "battle of the titans," once China overtakes the United States in global might.⁹ It is likely that Shambaugh's, Nye's, and Ikenberry's arguments about the failure of Chinese power strategies are mainly intended to downplay Mearsheimerian alarmism with the suggestion that such a hegemonic transition might not take place in the foreseeable future.

⁹ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

However, despite some similarities, hegemonic cycles are also somewhat unique in their own right. US leadership in the third world did not involve direct colonization of underdeveloped societies as did British and European periods of hegemony. Yet we do not say that the US failed to colonize the third world during her period of hegemony.

To avoid direct force and control, U.S. soft power has aimed at securing American interests by ideological means.¹⁰ By means of soft power the U.S. has managed to shape the preferences of others.¹¹ Furthermore, it has been important for the U.S.'s global role that its soft-power policies managed to push forward its own global norms and interpretation of the world.¹² This was due to the fact that the bipolar structure of world politics was based on an ideological battle between communists and capitalists: a battle that concerned styles of domestic governance. In that context soft power meant not only persuading countries (governments), but also persuading ordinary people in other states. In order for the U.S. to ensure that other countries are favorable to its interests, their people must be made to have confidence in the American concept of freedom. Furthermore, American soft power has meant the creation of a union of supporters of the free world. Only by expanding the "free world" can the U.S. guarantee its security and leadership.¹³ Thus in the hegemonic context of the Cold War, power strategies had to be intrusive in the sense that they needed to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries by supporting democracy and capitalism. This was needed, on the one hand, to make countries act as the United States wanted them to act, and, on the other hand, to make them ally with the United States by joining the alliance

¹⁰ Jaime Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness and the Revolutionary Process*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

¹¹ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics*.

¹² Alan W. Cafruny, "The Gramscian Concept of Declining Hegemony: Stages of US Power and the Evolution of International Economic Relations," in David P. Rapkin, ed., *World Leadership and Hegemony. International Political Economy Yearbook, Vol. 5* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990), 97–118.

¹³ Jim A. Kuypers, *Presidential Crisis Rhetoric and the Press in the Post-Cold-War World* (New York: Praeger, 1997); Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations.," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (93 1992): 22–49.

of “the free world.” The kind of soft power that manipulates preferences in this kind of context will be called hegemonic in this article, due to the fact that such soft power not only aims at manipulating preferences about the relationship between the powerful country and its potential supporters, but also by intrusively manipulating domestic preferences.

Chinese foreign policy doctrine has set out a different kind of power strategy. The relationship between China and other countries, it declares, is to be based on equality and common interest rather than the promotion or imposition of Chinese ideologies and models of domestic governance. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence from 1954 emphasized this,¹⁴ while the Principles of Foreign Aid emphasize the same commitment to non-interference.¹⁵ In 2004 President Hu Jintao announced what he referred to as the “Four No’s,” two of them being directly relevant to China’s soft-power strategy: the first “No” was no to hegemony, and the third “No” was no to blocs.¹⁶ Since the Cultural Revolution, China has reaffirmed its commitment to anti-hegemonism and this, in official Chinese parlance, has meant refraining from imposing Chinese ideas relating to domestic administration on other countries.¹⁷ The doctrine of peaceful rise also simply involves convincing others of the usefulness of mutually beneficial economic state-to-state cooperation with China.¹⁸

China’s international power strategy has changed recently, but it has not become hegemonic, at least not in a way that is reflected in its declarations. On the one hand, new Chinese declarations

¹⁴ “Five Principles of Peaceful Cooperation.” (United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 299, United Nation, June 3, 1954), <http://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20299/v299.pdf>.

¹⁵ “Zhou Enlai Announces Eight Principles of Foreign Aid,” accessed July 18, 2013, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-08/13/content_11149131.htm.

¹⁶ Giovanni Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing*. (London: Verso, 2008).

¹⁷ Xiaoping Deng, “We Shall Concentrate On Economic Development. September 18, 1982,” *Talk With Kim Il Sung, General Secretary Of The Central Committee Of The Korean Workers’ Party*. Available at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol3/text/c1030.html>, 1982; *ibid*.

¹⁸ Jianyong Yue, “Peaceful Rise of China: Myth or Reality?,” *International Politics* 45, no. 4 (July 2008): 439–56, doi:10.1057/ip.2008.13; Jaewoo Choo, “Ideas Matter: China’s Peaceful Rise,” *Asia Europe Journal* 7, no. 3–4 (December 1, 2009): 389–404, “Full Text: China’s Peaceful Development,” 2011, http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-09/06/content_1941354.htm.

have shown that in addition to economic growth China has started to seek *National Rejuvenation*. According to Yan Xuetong,¹⁹ this has meant a move away from the doctrine of *Keeping a Low Profile*, introduced by Deng Xiaoping,²⁰ to the doctrine of *Striving for Achievement*, explained in speeches by the Foreign Minister Wang Yi²¹ and President Xi Jinping.²² According to Yan Xuetong, this will emphasize Chinese power interests; it will inevitably introduce a competition between the United States and China, and it will require that a new emphasis be given to the image of China in the world.²³ However, even if China now needs political power to complement its economic growth, and even though China now needs a positive image to sustain its power and economic growth, this does not mean that China needs hegemonic soft power (=power to manipulate preferences related to domestic affairs), and thus China's soft power should not be judged as if it is needed for the promotion of its hegemonic ideology or hegemonic position, as the existing analyses of Chinese soft power by Shambaugh, Nye, Ikenberry, and the PEW institute suggest. China's soft power is not targeted at selling Chinese culture and a way of life that others are to apply, but, instead, the main focus of Chinese soft power is in the development of relationships, so that China together with its important friends can find ways to achieve mutually beneficial cooperation. Typical examples of this can be found in the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (<http://www.focac.org/eng/>) or in the China-ECLAC Forum between China and the UN-based Economic Commission for Latin America. The influencing of other countries preferences in Chinese soft power is not to sell the Chinese way but to sell cooperation

¹⁹ Yan Xuetong, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement," *Unpublished Paper*, 2014.

²⁰ Xiaoping Deng, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping Volume III (1982-1992)*, (<http://english.cpcnews.cn/206216/7999713.html>: People's Daily, undated), 350.

²¹ Yi Wang, "Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, June 27, 2013), <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1053908.shtml>.

²² Jinping Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries," October 24, 2013, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1093870.shtml>.

²³ Xuetong, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement"; Yan Xuetong, "The Weakening of the Unipolar Configuration," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, November 14, 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/11/14/weakening-of-unipolar-configuration/eij8>.

with China. Thus Chinese soft power is not hegemonic but relational. This is clearly stated both in the speech of President Xi Jinping and in that of Foreign Minister Wang Yi.²⁴ However, this approach to Chinese soft power has been confused with a hegemonic approach by the presence of a few concepts that make the anti-hegemonic commitment of Chinese soft power look somewhat fuzzy.

The first of the new ideas that have sometimes been confused with hegemonism concerns the question of why China needs a positive image and soft power to foster it. Owing to the growth of its economic might, China has needed to take into account the security and economic needs of other countries to make its growth sustainable: “if China’s development cannot be shared by the world, its development will surely be unsustainable.”²⁵ The attitudes of others are thus important for China’s growth, as well as for China’s power.²⁶ In this sense, China can no longer keep the low profile of the past. China needs to show that it places morality above selfish self-interest if it is to gain the good will of others. This good will is also needed to sustain its economic growth as well as its political power. In the words of Foreign Minister Wang Yi, “we emphasize both morality and interests in our exchanges with other developing countries and we put morality before interests. This is an important reason why China’s diplomacy has gained extensive support.” Does this then mean that China has become a hegemonic power that sells its image, interpretations, and values, and thus needs a similar kind of soft power to that of the United States? In other words does China need hegemonic soft power? I argue that it does not, as the morality China emphasizes above interests is not a morality that China would like to impose on or sell to others.

²⁴ Xi Jinping, “Work Together to Maintain World Peace and Security. Address by Vice President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China At the Opening Ceremony of the World Peace Forum.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, July 7, 2012), <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/wshd/t951973.htm>; Wang, “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum”; Xi Jinping, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”

²⁵ Wang, “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum.”

²⁶ Xuetong, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement.”

The concept of the Chinese Dream, launched by President Xi Jinping, has also occasionally been interpreted as a hegemonic project that is designed to export a Chinese Dream just as the U.S. has exported the American Dream. Xi Jinping did mention in his very important speech on foreign policy that he wanted to spread China’s voice, and integrate the Chinese dream with the desires of the people of neighboring countries.²⁷ There is no doubt that the idea of integrating a Chinese dream with the dreams of others can be interpreted as a hegemonic project. In fact it has been interpreted as such by famous philosophers,²⁸ and hegemonic interpretations have also been presented by the *People’s Daily*.²⁹ When explaining how the Chinese Dream was important for the whole world, how other countries are also enthusiastic about the Chinese Dream, and how the Chinese Dream shapes the world, President Xi Jinping’s concept was used in a way that was similar to the way in which the concept of the American Dream was used to impose hegemonic values and dreams on other sovereign countries. Assuming that one’s own values are universal and that one’s own dreams are the dreams of others, introduces, as can be seen in Truman’s statements about the American Dream,³⁰ the “arrogance of power” and turns a country into a hegemonic nation.³¹

However, if one examines Xi Jinping’s use of the concept more closely, it becomes clear that this dream could also be interpreted as something purely domestic, while its promotion internationally is

²⁷ Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”

²⁸ Zhao Tingyang, “Rethinking Empire from the Chinese Concept ‘All Under Heaven’,” in William A. Callahan and Elena Barabantseva Ed., *China Orders the World. Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*. (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press & Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 54–88.

²⁹ Xinhua, “‘Chinese Dream’ to Benefit World - People’s Daily Online,” March 5, 2013, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8154491.html>; “World Also Needs ‘Chinese Dream’ - People’s Daily Online,” December 5, 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8045705.html>; “Chinese Dream to Shape Global Landscape: Foreign Experts - People’s Daily Online,” December 8, 2013, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8477893.html>; “Chinese Dream: Necessary for Both China and the World - People’s Daily Online,” February 7, 2013, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8126122.html>.

³⁰ Harry S Truman, “Statement by the President on the Death of David K. Niles,” September 28, 1952, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14267&st=American+Dream&st1=>.

³¹ J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963); Susan Ann Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

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2 simply an attempt to have domestic Chinese aspirations accepted by the international community.³²
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5 When President Xi Jinping says that the Chinese Dream has to be integrated into the dreams of
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7 other nations,³³ he makes a distinction between different dreams, rather than suggesting that the
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9 integration could be done by selling or imposing the Chinese Dream to or on others. Instead of
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11 describing partisan visions, President Xi Jinping said that the “equality” of nations and the “respect
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13 of sovereign rights of nations” is part of the Chinese Dream.³⁴ Furthermore, he characterized the
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15 principles according to which the dreams of countries have to be “integrated” by using concepts that
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17 clearly distinguish the Chinese dream from imposing hegemonic concepts: “A country which
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19 pursues its own development, security and well-being must also let other countries pursue their
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21 development, security and well-being. All countries must take a cooperative approach with an
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23 innovative spirit and responsible attitude, stand together and seek win-win cooperation to resolve
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25 various problems and challenges, and foster a harmonious and stable international and regional
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27 security environment.”³⁵
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32 Thus, the Chinese Dream is not to be imposed on other countries. On the contrary, it is China’s
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34 dream, which will have to be adjusted to the equally important dreams of other nations in order to
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36 find ways to promote “mutual gains” and “mutual benefit.”³⁶ This is the normative starting point of
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38 China’s new foreign policy. Despite its economic and political growth and rejuvenation, China’s
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40 expanding of power does not, at least on a reading of its declarations, confuse power with
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42 hegemonic ambitions. The distinction between the two has been explained by Yan Xuetong in his
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44 analysis of the Chinese realist concept of morality in international relations: “For moral realism,
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49 ³² Xiaoying Qin, “The Chinese Dream vs. The American Dream | CHINA US Focus,” April 27, 2013,
50 <http://www.chinausfocus.com/political-social-development/the-chinese-dream-vs-the-american-dream/>.

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52 ³³ Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”

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54 ³⁴ Ibid.

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56 ³⁵ Xi, “Work Together to Maintain World Peace and Security. Address by Vice President Xi Jinping of the People’s
57 Republic of China At the Opening Ceremony of the World Peace Forum.”

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59 ³⁶ Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”
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foreign policies featuring self-disciplined morality aim at obtaining more international support besides a moral image. Regarding the political moral principles that China proposed to the international community, Xi Jinping told Chinese officials: ‘We should first practice those ideas ourselves.’³⁷ The interpretation of the Foreign Minister of China is the same and explicitly repeats Deng Xiaoping’s concept of anti-hegemonism in the new environment of national rejuvenation: “we must advocate equality between all countries regardless of their size and promote democracy in international relations. It means that we must reject any law of the jungle, oppose any form of hegemonism, oppose the big, the strong and the rich bullying the small, the weak and the poor, and oppose interference in other countries’ internal affairs.”³⁸ Thus to say that Chinese greatness and national rejuvenation could be a dream similar to the American one, which is related to the American way of life, is not convincing.

The strategy of justifying China’s rise is associated with anti-hegemonism and this difference between the United States and China is so much part of Chinese diplomatic identity that even if China’s political elite wanted to change course on this, it would have tremendous difficulties in doing so. Even according to scholars that emphasize China’s power-interests, Chinese morality is self-restraining and has power-implications only in so far as it gives legitimacy for China’s use of power in international relations. Thus, while Chinese soft power should make other countries tolerant and supportive of China’s right to its dreams, it does not need to make the Chinese Dream attractive for others to adopt. Thus Chinese soft power should not be measured by the attractiveness of Chinese values, dreams, and culture as opinion polls have done when measuring the degree to which people from other countries like Chinese culture, music, political system, etc., as such. Other citizens do not need to have similar values, they do not need to want Chinese values for themselves, they just need to appreciate that the Chinese Dream and Chinese values are acceptable for China.

³⁷ Xuetong, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement.”

³⁸ Wang, “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum.”

However, the concept of the Chinese Dream is not the only concept that has been interpreted as a sign of hegemonism in Chinese foreign policy doctrine. China also launches or promotes concepts like the Chinese Model or the Beijing Consensus that seem to be designed to attract developing countries to some economic ideas that China has developed for itself.³⁹ On closer inspection, it seems, however, that the function of concepts like the Beijing consensus and the Chinese Model are simply designed to counter the imposition of the hegemonic neoliberal Washington consensus, and offer developing countries an alternative model. After all the Chinese Model and the Beijing Consensus are concepts that describe China's own line and perhaps also China's preferred way of engaging in economic cooperation. If one looks at how these concepts have been used, the first thing one realizes is that they are introduced by an American scholar associated with the consulting firm of former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.⁴⁰ Thus the origin of the concept is not Chinese. However, when the Beijing Consensus is analyzed by an academic with a Chinese name the concept is used as an explanatory, rather than as a normative concept.⁴¹ The Beijing Consensus is operationalized as a model that explains China's economic success. Alternatively it is simply used as the name for the Chinese economic approach. Then the concept is simply used as a normatively neutral name rather than something that needs to be made attractive by using soft power.⁴² Unlike the USA, which used soft power and aid and sometimes even military might, to promote liberal economic principles in other countries, there are no political declarations promoting

³⁹ Zhang Weiwei, "The Allure of the Chinese Model," *International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 2006.

⁴⁰ Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus* (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2004).

⁴¹ E.K.Y. Chen, "Asian Capitalism: Beijing Consensus as an Economic Development Model for the 21st Century," *Asian Responses to the Global Financial Crisis: The Impact of Regionalism and the Role of the G20*, 2012, 24; Yasheng Huang, "Chinomics: The Fallacy of the Beijing Consensus," *The Wall Street Journal Asia*, June 21, 2010, 13; Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, "In Search of China's Developmental Model: Beyond the Beijing Consensus," *Journal of International & Global Studies* 3, no. 2 (2012): 113–16.

⁴² Yang Yao, "Beijing Consensus or Washington Consensus," *Development Outreach*, April 2011, Vol.13(1), pp.26-31 13, no. 1 (2011): 26–31; Nai-ji Lu, "Beijing Consensus vs. Washington Consensus," *Dongbei Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban)/Journal of Northeastern University (Social Science)* 8, no. 1 (January 2006): 42; X. Li, "Redefining Beijing Consensus: Ten Economic Principles," ed. K.E. Brødsgaard and M. Jacobsen, *China Economic Journal*, 2, no. 3 (March 2010): 297–311.

the Beijing Consensus as a Chinese model that other countries should adopt. The Washington Consensus was a set of agreements that consolidated the power of the United States in international economic and financial institutions. These agreements were founded on the attractiveness of the economic model preferred by the United States. Thus while the attractiveness of the Washington economic model needed to be boosted for American interests, the Beijing Model does not really have any relationship to Chinese interests, and thus Chinese soft power does not need to promote the attractiveness of the Chinese economic model. Yet, China did use the concept of the Beijing Consensus as the name for an agreement signed in September 2011 by the BRICS countries.⁴³ However, the agreement on economic cooperation between the BRICS countries did not impose an economic formula on its members. On the contrary, the domestic economic policies of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are vastly different. Thus, the Beijing Consensus does not challenge the idea that China subscribes consistently to an anti-hegemonic set of foreign policy objectives. Moreover, the context of China's soft power is one in which China does not need to attract other countries to China's domestic economic ways.

The fact that China invests heavily in the promotion of its culture by funding Confucius Institutes even in developed countries also appears to challenge the argument, proposed by this article, that China's soft power does not need to promote the attractiveness of China's economic or political formula, or its culture. Xi Jinping's explanation of Chinese foreign policy in October 2013, however, suggests that even this is not designed to promote Chinese culture as such, but rather an understanding of Chinese culture in other countries. President Xi Jinping explained the need for cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges as part of the Chinese aim of "letting the awareness of a community of common destiny take root in the neighbouring countries."⁴⁴

⁴³ BBC, "BRICS Nations Sign Beijing Consensus to Fight Financial Crisis," *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, September 21, 2011, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/892967547/fulltext/embedded/SFLFVWT816H6W710?source=fedsrch>; Peoples Daily, "BRIC Nations Sign Beijing Consensus - People's Daily Online," September 22, 2011, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7602405.html>.

⁴⁴ Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries."

Confucian culture is very China specific and would not be the first thing China would try to impose on foreign cultures if it had hegemonic objectives. To say that Confucius Institutes are seeking to convert Europeans and Americans to Confucianism would not be convincing. Thus it is likely that Confucius Institutes are in the business of promoting understanding, rather than selling the Chinese language or culture to others. In this way, Chinese soft power will not have to focus on the attractiveness of Chinese culture, but on increasing the understanding among other countries of Chinese culture. This is clearly different to Cold War policies whereby both the Soviet Union, and, especially, the United States were eagerly selling their own culture, values, language, etc., and thus needed their culture to look attractive.

Assessing Anti-Hegemonic Soft Power

As shown above, China's peaceful rise does not need the societies of other countries to change or that the people of these other societies share Chinese values and admire China's culture. Neither does China aim at hegemonic Confucian alliances against other powers. Whether China needs alliances at all is disputed, and probably depends on what we mean by alliances.⁴⁵ Yet, there are no disagreements on the fact that in the current historical context China does not need to seek alliances by proving the attraction of Chinese culture, science, etc. This is why Chinese soft power, for the purpose of China's peaceful rise, has no interest in demonstrating the virtues of Chinese society or its type of governance.⁴⁶ The fact that Chinese soft power has not focused on persuading other societies to adopt Chinese social or economic values – as expressed in the conclusion of a PEW study that China's soft-power promotion of Chinese TV, technology, and music, etc., has "failed" – only shows that this declaratory commitment has some validity in the Chinese strategy of soft power.

⁴⁵ Yan Xuetong claims that China does (Xuetong, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement.") while Choo Jaewoo suggests that China does not (Choo, "Ideas Matter").

⁴⁶ "Full Text: China's Peaceful Development."

China's rise is not taking place in the context of a competition between different political systems. As a result, China does not need to attract other powers to its political or economic system. Countries are not going to yield to Chinese demands, even if they were attracted to the Chinese political system. Similarly, countries are not destined to oppose China, if they subscribe to a different formula of domestic governance. Instead, countries do what China wants them to do in terms of trade, that is, sell their oil and gas to China – but only if they want to, or are persuaded to do so. Chinese soft power aims at affecting their preferences with regards to, for example, selling oil to China, rather than with regards to Confucian values. China's political system or culture is irrelevant to China's global ambitions. Political systems or cultures are not relevant to global coalitions either, as coalitions are not likely to form around certain positions taken on questions about the types of political systems (as was the case during the cold war). Furthermore, the attractiveness or otherwise of China's political or economic system would not help it to form alliances. China does not need or want to sell its form of government, its economic wisdom, or its way of life. Thus, because this has not happened in China's case, one should not conclude that this is due to any failed attempts to do so in the recent past. The assumption is that Nye's and Shambaugh's analysis of China's global rise is based on an inappropriate derivation of the goals and concepts used in the context of American cold war leadership.

If instead of considering China's soft power capabilities in terms of U.S. values, we compare China's strategies against its own values and objectives, we may see a different pattern of success. Furthermore, if we look at soft-power needs in the context of today, instead of looking at the soft-power requirements of the cold war, China's strategies no longer seem to be failures. The structural factor common to both Chinese and U.S. strength in the current context has been both powers' dependence on imported energy resources for growth. President George W. Bush admitted that the

United States is addicted to oil,⁴⁷ while some analysts have predicted that China's need for imported energy will be so pressing that it could make the country compromise its foreign policy principles of anti-hegemonism.⁴⁸

A form of soft power that could cater to this need for growth would shape the preferences of oil producers in such a way that trade and favorable prices might be possible. In fact, such soft power can be measured by opinion polls, if one reinterprets them and makes one adjustment to the data. The success or failure of Chinese soft power in support of its energy security is evident in the data on other countries' attitudes to China and the U.S. provided by PEW, if we add a dummy variable to the data revealing whether or not the country is a net oil exporter. Table 1 shows the average percentages of respondents having a favorable attitude towards China and America:

Table 1: Favorable attitudes in oil-producing countries and non-oil-producing countries

	Favorable towards the U.S.	Favorable towards China	Difference in U.S. favor
Oil exporters	49.3%	66.1%	-16.9%
Non-exporters	60.2%	49.6%	10.5%

It is evident from the table that China is seen favorably by roughly two-thirds of the population in oil-exporting countries, while less than half perceive the U.S. positively. Among oil-importing countries, the U.S. is viewed positively by over 60%, while China is viewed favorably by less than 50%. China is 17% more popular in oil-exporting countries and 11% less popular in oil-importing countries. This suggests that while America's soft power promotes the U.S. in general, Chinese soft power is more targeted. It aims at promoting the perception that there are benefits and opportunities from collaborating with China and thus targets countries with which China actually collaborates. Instead of being able to build ideological coalitions, China's soft power has managed to shape preferences for crucially important business partnerships. Furthermore, Chinese business practices

⁴⁷ Richard A. Lovett, "Addicted to Oil: How Can U.S. Fulfill Bush Pledge?," *National Geographic News*, February 14, 2006, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/02/0214_060214_bush_oil.html.

⁴⁸ Ian Taylor, *China's New Role in Africa*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2009).

are liked in general, particularly in places where China has expanding business interests, such as Africa.⁴⁹

If we add yet another variable to the PEW data, namely, the recent expansion of Chinese investments, we also find a strong correlation between expanding economic ties and favorable opinions of China. According to Kurlantzick's reading of China's five-year development plans, China defines North Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America as the areas of most rapidly increasing value for its development.⁵⁰ China is seen most favorably in Africa and in Latin America, where its economic ties have grown most dramatically, and it is much more favorably viewed in Central Asia than the U.S. However, China has not managed to compete with the U.S. in the West, despite its crucial economic interests there. Yet in areas such as Southern Europe, where Chinese investments have drastically increased, perceptions of China have become very positive. Spain and Greece are the two countries in the region most favorable towards China, while they, too, are the countries where the economic position of China has increased the most.⁵¹

If we look at the profile of favorable attitudes in the PEW data, it is also possible to see that China is weak in the variables measuring the expansiveness of Chinese political,⁵² cultural,⁵³ and economic values,⁵⁴ but very strong in the variables that demonstrate how countries feel about trading with China or about having diplomatic relations with China.⁵⁵ This could be interpreted as a sign of success for China's anti-hegemonic form of soft power. Even in the U.S.'s own neighborhood, namely, Latin America, only the people of Brazil and El Salvador thought that the economic influence of America was more favorable than that of China while in all the other Latin American countries studied people viewed Chinese influence as more positive.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ Andrew Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's," *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, July 18, 2013, 28, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/07/18/americas-global-image-remains-more-positive-than-chinas/>.

⁵⁰ Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive. How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 91.

⁵¹ Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's"; BBC World Service, "BBC Country Rating Poll: Views of China and India Slide While UK's Ratings Climb: Global Poll," May 22, 2013, <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/2013%20Country%20Rating%20Poll.pdf>.

⁵² "Ideas on democracy", "Ideas and customs spreading" and perceptions of China's "Respect of personal freedoms of China's own citizens".

⁵³ "Music, movies and television."

⁵⁴ Perceptions of China's universities and technology.

⁵⁵ "Influence on country in general" and "Influence on country's economy."

⁵⁶ Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's," 38.

It is also interesting to see that despite the fact that China's economic influence was generally viewed as very positive in most countries, the U.S. was more often seen as "considering my country's interest" than China.⁵⁷ This, too, demonstrates the difference between the benevolent hegemon, the U.S., and the anti-hegemon, China. While China emphasizes equality and mutual interest, and is thus economically beneficial for its partners, it is still not perceived as considerate of its partners' interests in the sense of "taking care of other countries". This does not constitute a failure of Chinese soft power since China, as an anti-hegemonic power, does not try to "take care" of other countries' interest. When China does business and even when China offers help in the resolution of conflicts inside another country,⁵⁸ China emphasizes its own interests and relies on the idea that where cooperation takes place among equals the negotiating partners will manage to take care of their own interests. The concept is to integrate China's dreams with other countries' dreams. China does not explicitly declare an interest in respecting other countries' interests, or a wish to "take care" of the interests of others.

The strategy of limiting hard and soft power to areas where it can respect the principle of non-interference has been a winning strategy. America's most extreme hard-power strategy of interference in domestic affairs, the use of drone strikes, seems to be its main soft-power liability. While it might have positive military consequences it erodes America's positive image in the world. What is worse is that this liability is souring America's relations with precisely those countries where good relations most needed, namely, the oil-producers (important for U.S. economic power) and with countries most crucial to America's strategic interests (i.e., those dealing with terrorism).⁵⁹

China, due to its anti-hegemonism, has no drones operating over foreign territories. Restraint in hard-power politics yields soft power. Thus Foreign Minister Wang's ideas of the relationship between morality and selfish interest could strengthen Chinese soft power.⁶⁰ Yet, there are limits to

⁵⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁵⁸ When peace negotiations between the Kachin Independence Organization and the government of Myanmar were hosted by China from January 2012 until June 2013, the arrangement was not motivated by China's commitment to the global values that it promoted, but instead, China's interest in securing its own gas and oil pipelines that ran across the battlefields were explicitly exposed as a Chinese motive for offering its good services. The China National Petroleum Corporation even paid part of the Chinese contribution concerning this conflict resolution (the author of this article has worked as a consultant in the Chinese attempt to offer its good services, and these impressions are immediate observations from that process).

⁵⁹ Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's," 14–15.

⁶⁰ Wang, "Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum."

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3 this strategy. In some cases hard power already weakens soft power as countries and citizens
4 perceive powerful countries with suspicion. This can be seen even in opinion polls, as there tends to
5 be a weak negative correlation between the perception of China's emerging position as the world's
6 most powerful country and the favorable attitude towards China.⁶¹ Power does not attract favor
7 even for China, even though its power is not viewed with as much suspicion as that of the U.S. Yet
8 countries where China is portrayed as powerful also see China as threatening and this means
9 relations with China are seen unfavorably.

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16 With increasing hard power, especially with increasing economic might, China is also affecting the
17 domestic correlation of forces of its partners, and this necessarily harms some while benefiting
18 others. Despite its doctrine of anti-hegemonism, China cannot always avoid influencing other
19 countries' domestic affairs. This seems to support the new Chinese approach in which China needs
20 to negotiate and integrate its economic growth with the development goals of its neighbors, in order
21 to avoid a situation where Chinese economic growth will become a liability to Chinese soft power.⁶²
22 This integration will not be problem-free, though. Whatever China does it will affect the domestic
23 situation in neighboring countries, and this will result in China making new enemies (as well as
24 friends, of course). The fact that China tends to deal with ruling elites is a safe choice for its soft
25 power, as they, self-evidently, are the ones that rule. However, if ruling elites change in autocratic
26 countries, the new rulers might be people that the previous ruling elite – which China might have
27 helped – had harshly repressed. Kurlantzick sees this as a major challenge for Chinese soft power,
28 particularly in Myanmar where huge energy infrastructure investments have been made in
29 cooperation with the autocratic military regime. Now that the country may democratize, those
30 whom “China once helped keep in prison” may emerge as the winners of the domestic political
31 battle.⁶³

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43 With its increasing economic power and globalizing interests, China's anti-hegemonism will also be
44 challenged by the globalization of its national interests. In the 2004 White Paper on China's
45 Defense,⁶⁴ China for the first time, hinted at the possibility of defending its economic interests

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⁶¹ Kohut, “America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's.”

⁶² Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries”; Wang,
“Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi
At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum.”

⁶³ Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive. How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World.*, 205.

⁶⁴ “China's Defense White Paper: A New Conceptual Framework for Security” (The Jamestown Foundation, April 25,
2013),

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3 militarily. It remains to be seen what this means, but if it involves military operations outside
4 China's own territory in defense of its economic interests this cannot bode well for fostering
5 goodwill towards China, let alone its commitment to anti-hegemonism and anti-imperialism.
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9 In some areas, respecting others' sovereignty, as an anti-hegemonic power should, is very difficult
10 for China. In two of its neighboring countries, Japan and the Philippines, people favorable towards
11 China are a small minority,⁶⁵ despite the fact that China has focused its soft power especially on
12 creating goodwill among neighboring countries.⁶⁶ This unpopularity is a genuine soft power
13 problem and not just a pseudo issue of China's own culture or way of life not being popular. This
14 unpopularity affects the way these countries conduct their political and economic relations with
15 China. The problem Chinese soft power has with regards to Japan and the Philippines may be due to
16 the fact that despite its non-hegemonic stand, China's maritime territorial disputes with Vietnam,
17 Japan, and the Philippines prevent it from respecting the sovereignty of these countries in territories
18 Vietnam, Japan and the Philippines perceive as their own. In the East China Sea and in the South
19 China Sea, China cannot avoid a hegemonic image in areas where there are disputes about the
20 ownership of maritime territories. While China tries to build acceptance towards its globalizing role
21 by showing that it is not a hegemon like the United States, it cannot be seen as a legitimate anti-
22 hegemonic power, as from the Japanese perspective it does not respect the sovereignty of Japan
23 over the islands that Japan calls Senkaku (Diaoyu). The same is true for the Philippines with regards
24 to China's policies in almost the entire Spratly archipelago and in the Paracel Islands with Vietnam
25 (even though the impact of the dispute with Vietnam on Vietnamese attitudes has not been verified
26 by the main international opinion polls to which Shambaugh, Nye, Ikenberry and others refer).
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39 It is difficult to say whether the political power objectives related to China's national rejuvenation
40 have pushed China into a position in relation to these disputed maritime territories that might result
41 in costs for Chinese soft power. Perhaps, where anti-hegemonism fails, China could show in
42 practice what the primacy of peaceful morality over self-interest means and show how shelving
43 disputes, avoiding the exercise and threat of violence could win some goodwill for China.
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52 [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=40784&cHash=7cdb20872966140532416d](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=40784&cHash=7cdb20872966140532416d3f7eafe6fd)
53 [3f7eafe6fd](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=40784&cHash=7cdb20872966140532416d3f7eafe6fd).

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55 ⁶⁵ BBC World Service, "BBC Country Rating Poll: Views of China and India Slide While UK's Ratings Climb: Global
56 Poll."

57 ⁶⁶ Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries."
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A Chinese way to contribute to peaceful solutions in world affairs?

The anti-hegemonic approach that characterizes China’s soft power also characterizes China’s approach to global governance. For the sake of national rejuvenation, China does need power, but its exercise of power in global governance does not need to comply with the patterns of the Cold War and the patterns of the U.S.’s approach to global governance. To understand why the mainstream American analysis of Chinese power has ended up concluding that China has failed and that China remains a partial power one can once again point to the problems that arise from using the American measuring stick for assessing China’s policies. China’s global power strategy does not serve American interests and thus it does not need to have the same capacities and strengths as America’s global power strategy. But the roots of the confusion are deeper. They are to be found in the American neo-liberal institutionalist way of perceiving global governance and its problems. We will need to identify the problematic assumptions of the mainstream analysis of China’s global strategy of power to come to a fair assessment.

In the neo-liberal institutionalist writings of Robert Keohane, Harvey Starr, Dean Pruitt, Joseph Nye, and Robert Axelrod, problems of international cooperation have been approached by using the famous game theory model of the prisoner’s dilemma as a structure for cooperation.⁶⁷ In this structure, cooperation is challenged either by the fear of being left with a “suckers payoff” (payoff for an actor that cooperates in good faith while the other player deceives him/her and exploits the naiveté of the actor), or with the temptation to leave the others with one.⁶⁸ This combination of fear and temptation make an uncooperative strategy individually rational, but also leaves both parties

⁶⁷ The structure of the prisoner’s dilemma can be illustrated with the following anecdote: “Two prisoners, held incommunicado, are charged with the same crime. They can be convicted only if either confesses... if one confesses, he is set free for having turned state’s evidence and is given a reward to boot. The prisoner who has held out is convicted ... and is given a more severe sentence than if he had also confessed.” (Rapoport, Anatol. *Prisoner’s Dilemma: A Study in Conflict and Cooperation*. University of Michigan Press, 1965: 24-25).

⁶⁸ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Harvard University Press, 2009).

worse off, when both follow what might be, individually, a rational strategy. Examples of this have been discussed in the debate on burden sharing in global governance and policing.⁶⁹

In addition to questions of burden sharing in global policing, the model of the prisoners' dilemma has been used in the analysis of various "global problems," such as finding a solution to the insistence of Iran to develop its nuclear capabilities. If the prevention of nuclear proliferation was a common goal, actions against such a goal can be seen as socially irrational "uncooperative behavior," even if rational for those particular nations willing to get the upper hand by secretly acquiring nuclear weapons.⁷⁰

Neo-liberal institutionalists have found a way out of the dilemma posed by structures of interaction that can be characterized as prisoners' dilemmas – a super-strategy. If the United States and other responsible powers simply insisted on reciprocity, others would have an incentive to cooperate. In this super-strategy, the United States will act in a reciprocal cooperative manner vis-à-vis those that are cooperative towards the United States. Therefore, the incentive to leave others with the suckers' payoff will be evened out by the prospect of future reciprocation ("shadow of the future"): if a country is uncooperative now, it will be met with an uncooperative attitude in the future.⁷¹

The interpretation of problems of international cooperation in terms of the prisoners' dilemma has been largely adopted by much of the American body politic and used in its rhetoric. The idea of offsetting the temptation to free ride in global governance by means of a super-strategy of reciprocity has been explicitly used in US policies towards China.⁷²

⁶⁹ Harvey Starr, *Anarchy, Order, and Integration: How to Manage Interdependence* (University of Michigan Press, 2000).

⁷⁰ N. S. Sisodia and Ashok K. Behuria, *West Asia in Turmoil: Implications for Global Security* (Academic Foundation, 2007).

⁷¹ Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation: Revised Edition* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1985).

⁷² John Dumbrell, *Clinton's Foreign Policy: Between the Bushes, 1992-2000* (Routledge, 2009), 116. It has been claimed, though, that the super-strategy of reciprocity cannot be applied in the war on terror, and, as a result, George W.

Shambaugh uses the logic of the prisoner’s dilemma implicitly in his analysis of Chinese global politics. When talking about China’s lack of direct involvement in global governance, Shambaugh talks about “calls to contribute more to global “public goods” and about the accusation of China “being a “free rider” in the global system.”⁷³ He concludes that instead of supporting the “coalitions of the willing”, China opts for passivity or resistance towards solutions in order to avoid the burden of responsibility for global policing and governance.⁷⁴ China’s “full moral integration into the international system remains a work-in-progress.”⁷⁵ Nye, as one of the main theorists of neo-liberal institutionalism is even clearer about his use of the free-rider metaphor. Yet, Nye is also more critical about US hegemonic projects and thus he does not equate China’s non-participation in US hegemonic operations with free riding.⁷⁶ Yet, Nye too feels that China’s lack of any kind of norm-setting for and offering of a public role to the world community is problematic. If every power did this, and opted to avoid responsibility, the world would be left without governance and policing, and would lapse into the anarchy that is its natural state. However, both the interpretation that U.S. or Chinese policies towards global problems can be analyzed as reciprocal super-strategies towards problems perceived in terms of the prisoners’ dilemma, and the applicability of the prisoners’ dilemma in the analysis of global cooperation is questionable.

The setting of a problem whose analysis is structured in terms of the prisoners’ dilemma requires that the starting point for the uncooperative response by any coalition of the willing (that China decided not to join) had to be one in which the rogue state failed to cooperate. However, it turned out that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction, and thus Iraq was actually cooperating and

Bush has made an exception to the US foreign policy tradition of reciprocity Mark Osiel, *The End of Reciprocity: Terror, Torture, and the Law of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁷³ Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 8–9, 306.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 153.

⁷⁶ Nye, “Think Again.”

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2
3 in compliance with its non-proliferation treaty (NPT) obligations when the US decided to
4
5 “reciprocate” with an uncooperative strategy. In Iran the issue of whether the country is developing
6
7 nuclear weapons is also questioned. Joining sanctions or military action as a way of “reciprocating”
8
9 any perceived lack of cooperation would not necessarily fit the neo-liberal institutionalist formula
10
11 for the promotion of global cooperation.
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15 If we criticize China’s policies towards the main global security problems for being policies that
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17 sabotage the strategy of reciprocity of coalitions of the willing, then we must be able to establish
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19 that in these issues the United States has been cooperative to start with. Reciprocating
20
21 uncooperative strategies with uncooperative responses will not work, if the United States and the
22
23 coalitions of the willing were also uncooperative at the outset.⁷⁷ If we look at disputes between the
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25 United States and Iran, about Iran’s failure to comply with the norms of non-proliferation, then the
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27 validity of the United State’s initial position can also be called into question. When the United
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29 States started to push Iran towards changing its nuclear policies, the bone of contention was the so-
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31 called “Additional Protocol” of the non-proliferation treaty. The United States did not accuse Iran
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33 of being in non-compliance with the treaty itself, but, instead, the United States wanted Iran to
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35 ratify a modified treaty that was related to more intrusive verification procedures, the so-called
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37 Additional Protocol agreed by the IAEA’s Board of Governors in 1997. This protocol is voluntary
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39 and still only about two thirds of the signatories of the NPT have actually ratified this protocol, and
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41 it is in force in about half of the NPT signatory countries. Thus, the “failure to ratify” was not really
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43 a failure to comply with a mutually accepted norm, but instead, the application of pressure on Iran
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45 to ratify what was more of an *ad hoc* necessity for underpinning regional security. At the time, the
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47 United States had ratified the protocol, but it took a decade before it changed its legislation to
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49 comply with the stipulations of the protocol. In this sense, the United States was in violation of its
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51 own voluntary commitments, while Iran simply failed to make that commitment in the first place.
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57 ⁷⁷ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*.
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Later, in the question of the enrichment of uranium, the problem was quite similar: There were no legal or other obligations that bound Iran not to enrich uranium, and the United States, of course, enriched its own uranium.

Sanctions or military action would not be symmetrical with Iran’s noncooperation with respect to the non-proliferation treaty. A response in the form of military action would, in the logic of neo-liberal institutionalism, only be required as a reciprocal reaction to a military act. The problems related to indivisible collective goods such as non-proliferation is that reciprocity would be difficult to implement. This is due to the fact that the United States alone cannot end its commitments in policing the non-proliferation treaty in relation to North Korea, Iran, or, previously, to Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Thus, the whole idea of talking about reciprocity in relation to norms that are indivisible is inherently problematic. This limitation also applies to the claim that China is failing to contribute to the resolution of global problems on the basis of reciprocity.

That China’s failure to respond against Syria, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea could actually facilitate and improve global governance is also due to the dubious consequences of interpreting problems of cooperation by using the prisoners’ dilemma. Although there are three uncooperative outcomes that players might end up with in the prisoners’ dilemma, there is just one cooperative outcome in the setting. Thus this model ignores issues of distribution in the analysis of cooperation with only one cooperative outcome. Consequently, it is not possible to imagine alternative terms of cooperation with different ways of distributing the benefits of such cooperation outcomes. This could be a serious problem for the analysis of cooperation and global governance – a problem that has analytical and also political consequences. What if Iran wanted to cooperate, but not on the basis of terms unilaterally defined by the United States? What if China, instead of free riding in the US-led system of global governance, was promoting its own path to global governance? What if global governance was not about intrusion into everything one cannot accept, but instead about silently working for a greater respect of equal sovereignty among nations, international legality, the

centrality of the UN, and international democracy? Any of the aforementioned cooperative scenarios would be considered free riding and would lead to uncooperative responses, if one modeled these interactions as prisoners' dilemmas.

It is easy to imagine the political consequences of interpreting global governance in terms of politics framed as prisoners' dilemma types of problems. Such an interpretation of global governance gives all the power to the one that sets the agenda and defines what is cooperative and what constitutes a failure to cooperate in world politics. What is even more alarming is the fact that the framing of global affairs as prisoners' dilemmas requires the global hegemon to react constantly to uncooperative behavior by reciprocating the perceived lack of cooperation with uncooperative moves. In cases where the hegemonic response cannot be of the same nature as the original "offense" (due to the indivisibility problem), reciprocity and maintenance of global order will have to entail various types of punishments meted out to countries and actors that do not comply with the prevailing hegemonic interpretation of rules and strategic necessities.

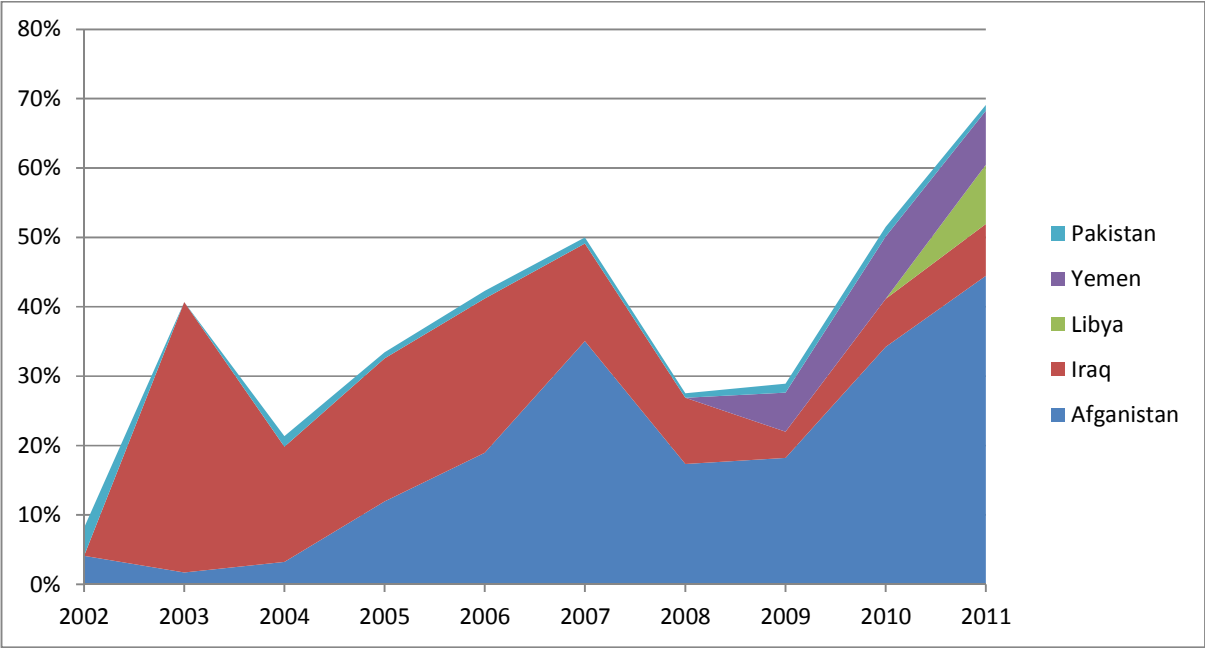
One way of looking at the successfulness of global governance from the point of view of security is to look at how many people die in conflicts and wars. I will use a battle deaths dataset produced at Uppsala University, Sweden,⁷⁸ which is based on a meta-analysis of media reporting in conflicts.⁷⁹ The Uppsala data are useful despite the fact that this source is accused of systematically underreporting the number of fatalities in conflicts. However, in this argument I am only interested in the relative share, which is unaffected by systematic underreporting of fatalities in conflicts that are motivated by global policing. In the figure below we can see that the costs of "reciprocation" and prisoners' dilemma framed-thinking have increased dramatically during the past decade. We can see that conflicts that are initiated by a US intervention with various coalitions of the willing or

⁷⁸ UCDP, "Battle-Related Deaths Dataset v.5-2012, Uppsala Conflict Data Program, [Www.ucdp.uu.se](http://www.ucdp.uu.se), Uppsala University,," 2012.

⁷⁹ Ralf Sundberg, "Collective Violence 2002 - 2007: Global and Regional Trends,," in Harbom, Lotta and Ralph Sundberg, Eds., *States in Armed Conflict* (Uppsala: Universitetsstruckeriet, 2008).

interventions using drones that constitute part of the global war on terror by the same coalitions now constitute up to 70% of all the fatalities of wars and conflicts in the world.

Figure: The Contribution of Violent “Global Governance” to Global War Fatalities



“Global governance,” which Shambaugh implicitly suggests is the only option for China to join in, could be considered the main global problem. According to Shambaugh, “When one examines a number of recent international challenges or crises: Sudan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan, Somalia but excluding North Korea – an aloof and unhelpful China is evident.⁸⁰” But the implication of the figure is that China is currently refusing to act in a way that would in fact only exacerbate some of the world’s main international problems. Thus, leading “coalitions of the unwilling” might actually not be such a bad strategy for China to pursue.

⁸⁰ Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, 46.

China's global approach does not entail that rogue states' actions should be responded to by equal degree of uncooperative attitude. Instead, China wants to focus on the discussion about what would constitute fair terms for any resolution. By using this approach, China could be on the right side of history. Although not willing to lead anti-American coalitions or punish the United States for its aggressions, China still raises the question about the rules of global democracy and the equal right of every country to its sovereignty. The focus of China's strategy is on the terms of peace and cooperation rather than on the assumption that just one set of cooperative strategies must be applied. A framing of global cooperation as a bargaining process about different terms of peace, or resolution, is a better and less biased way of contextualizing China's current global role.⁸¹

Conclusions

Assessment by major American academics about China's soft power strategy and contribution to global affairs has been damning: China has been seen as an incomplete power unable to justify its global role by means of soft power. This assessment has become rather dominant in the international academia and sometimes even in the media. However, this article has shown fundamental problems in the dominant view. China's success has been measured as if it aimed at the same goals as the United States and as if the world was similar to the one in which the United States raised in hegemonic prominence. However, China is not an incomplete power; it is an anti-hegemonic power. Thus its soft power needs are different from those of a hegemonic power. Furthermore, the world is not the same as it was during the Cold War. States no longer need to form alliances on the basis of cultural and political similarity. Instead, big powers of the present seek complementation and mutual gains. This article has shown how the different global context and how the different Chinese approach to hegemonism affect the way in which China's soft power and

⁸¹ John Harsanyi, "Approaches to Bargaining Problem Before and After the Theory of Games," *Econometrica* 24 (1956): 144–56; Timo Kivimäki, *US–Indonesian Hegemonic Bargaining: Strength of Weakness* (Adlershot: Ashgate, 2003); John Nash, "The Bargaining Problem," *Econometrica* 18 (1950): 155–62.

contribution to global affairs should be assessed. The American assessment of Chinese soft power and global role is misleading and should no longer be dominant.

If soft power is like a beauty contest, and if global governance can only be what the United States has practiced, China has failed miserably in both soft power and global governance. If hegemonic cycles are repeated in the same form, then China is not heading for world leadership. However, just as American leadership allowed more independent nation building in the developing world than European colonialism had, China too can aim at a different set of norms and objectives than those set down by American leadership. Political systems no longer compete between each other, and thus China does not need to demonstrate the superiority of its own political ideas. This is why China's soft power does not need to attract in the same way that U.S. soft power had to during the Cold War. Nor is the American concept of global governance the only way of showing responsibility on global issues. Instead, as shown above, it might very well be the irresponsible line that causes a majority of global suffering. Thus, China should not be measured by the American measuring stick, but should be allowed to forge its own way of peaceful development. As long as China is committed to its policies of anti-hegemonism, non-interference, and anti-militarism, China's soft power and contribution to global governance should not be seen as threatening or irresponsible. China's anti-hegemonism is a contribution to global affairs it does not make Chinese power incomplete.

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Soft Power and Global Governance with Chinese Charactersⁱ

Some leading American theorists of China’s global role, such as Shambaugh, Nye, Ikenberry, and many others have claimed that China has not managed to develop its soft/attractive power.¹ Since China has not managed to attract the world to its culture, values, and ways, it has not found its place in global governance. Instead, China has become a power that punches below its weight. This article focuses on the empirical generalization, proposed by these American scholars, that China’s soft power has failed and that this has resulted in that country’s incomplete global engagement. The aim of this article is to show that this generalization is false by first questioning whether China really has failed in its soft power, and, secondly, by showing that the measuring sticks used to prove the incompleteness of China’s global role are themselves flawed.

Opinion polls that measure China’s image in the world show that while China’s popularity was on the rise in the first decade of the new millennium, its star began to decline after that.² Even when China did better at promoting its image, its popularity was of limited use, as its soft power never translated into foreign-policy power, according to Gill and Huang.³ The evidence for China’s soft-

¹ G. John Ikenberry, “The Rise of China, the United States, and the Future of the Liberal International Order,” in David L. Shambaugh, Ed., *Tangled Titans: The United States and China* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012); Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); Joseph S. Nye, “Think Again: Soft Power,” *Foreign Policy*, February 23, 2006, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/02/22/think_again_soft_power; Joseph S. Nye, “What China and Russia Don’t Get About Soft Power,” *Foreign Policy*, April 29, 2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/04/29/what_china_and_russia_don_t_get_about_soft_power?wp_login_redirect=0; David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Bruce Stokes, “Asia’s View of China – Mostly Wary, but Japan Most of All,” *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, 2013, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/08/05/asias-view-of-china-mostly-wary-but-japan-most-of-all/>.

² Young Nam Cho and Jong Ho Jeong, “China’s Soft Power: Discussions, Resources, and Prospects,” *Asian Survey* 48, no. 3 (June 1, 2008): 453–72.

³ Bates Gill and Yanzhong Huang, “Sources and Limits of Chinese ‘Soft Power,’” *Survival* (00396338) 48, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 17–36,

power failure is solid and consistent: extensive opinion polls, using different methodologies, all end up with the same conclusion. Equally clear is the evidence of China's meager role and power in global governance projects. China appears unwilling to take its place in operations to regulate the world. Thus, China has failed in her globalization role; it has become a "partial power,"⁴ which cannot lead the world and will not challenge the U.S.'s leadership.

Going against this American mainstream interpretation seems challenging, especially since it has been supported with solid evidence by some of the best experts on global politics and China's role therein. Yet, it will be suggested in this article that China's soft-power focus is not directed at attracting other powers to the Chinese way of doing things or Chinese system. This contrasts with the policy of the United States during the Cold War when it sought to convince the world of the virtues of liberal democracy and capitalism and of the vices of totalitarian communism. China's foreign policy does not seek to persuade other countries of the benefits or superiority of the Chinese system and adopt it in their own domestic affairs, as the United States attempted to do. The reason why the United States (and the Soviet Union) was eager to manipulate opinion so as to make its system the system of choice in other countries was that the world was divided between capitalist and communist states. Then, in a bipolar world, global identity and membership in a global coalition was associated with domestic politics. If soft power is defined as an ability to persuade other states to adopt capitalism or socialism, as was the case during the cold war, then China has failed. However, if soft power is defined as an ability to persuade other powers to do, in world affairs, things that China wants them to do, or would benefit from them so doing, then the jury should wait for further evidence before giving its verdict. The evidence will have to be drawn from an analysis of soft power specific to China's, not America's, needs.

⁴ Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*.

The same is true for China's global power strategies. If China had the same strategy and the same power objectives today as those of the United States during the cold war, we could say that China has failed. However, again, China's power strategies are tuned to China's own objectives and China's version of a just international system, not to the objectives and norms that the United States had during its own hegemony, and thus China's global power strategies should not be measured by using an American yardstick. Thus this article suggests that if one looks at China's real objectives, and its attempts to persuade other world powers to act in a way that suits these objectives, it seems clear that China has been more successful with its global power strategies and its soft power than scholars have concluded.

This article will start by criticizing some of the analytical concepts of current American mainstream studies of Chinese power: concepts that have their origins in the historical context of the Cold War, and are derived from a powerful but inappropriate model of cooperation currently being pursued by the USA. By using concepts that are more appropriate to the analysis of global governance and soft power today, the article will claim that Ikenberry's, Nye's, and Shambaugh's analysis of China's approach to the global system is too damning and too biased towards the American worldview.

It must be noted that Chinese global governance and soft power have been theorized from many alternative perspectives, some of which come closer to my critical viewpoint.⁵ The Chinese academic debate about Chinese soft power and global governance in particular has not always been based on the miscontextualized ideas of power of attraction and global governance. However, the focus of this article is on the above mentioned influential and well publicized Anglo-American analyses. It is the mainstream Anglo-American analysis of China's projection of its power on the world stage that will be criticized in this article.

⁵ For example, Li Mingjiang, Hongyi Lai and Yiyi Lu have approached the concept of soft power from a constructivist point of view and ended up with results that are easier to accept than the conclusions presented by Shambaugh, Nye, and others (Hongyi Lai and Yiyi Lu, *China's Soft Power and International Relations* (Routledge, 2012); Mingjiang Li, "Soft Power: Theory And the Chinese Approach, A Paper Presented at a Seminar on The Rise of China and Its Soft Power." (S. Rajaratnam School Of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, October 18, 2007).

Theoretical contexts and concepts that guide interpretations of Chinese power

There are two contextualizations in this mainstream analysis of Chinese power that lead to misconceptions. The first miscontextualization arises from seeing the subject of China's rise through the lens of the previous, American, hegemonic period. The second miscontextualization is simply a product of an uncritical attitude towards partisan American framings of problems of global cooperation. To prove this I will take a short look at the premises of the concept of soft power.

As it was the seminal work by Joseph S. Nye which introduced the concept of soft power to the literature on international relations, it is understandable that the main concepts developed by Nye are still the conventional wisdom. This is why it is possible to trace what I feel is a misunderstanding about Chinese soft power to Nye's concepts.

The starting point of Nye's theory of soft power is attractive in its simplicity. It is based on the relational concept of power, as defined by Robert A. Dahl, in which A has power over B if and only if A can make B do something B would not do without A's intervention.⁶ Nye's concept of power extends to structural contexts as well, especially when he speaks about the power that defines agendas in social interaction. But the idea of A changing the behavior of B is present even in Nye's concept of structural power. By defining agendas, A can make B do something. While A's rewards and penalties (economic and military power) change B's behavior by creating conditions that change B's utility calculations, soft power in Nye's theory is something that uses neither rewards nor penalties, but instead changes the preference calculus by having B adjust its preferences to the liking of A: "Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others."⁷ In this way soft

⁶ Nye, "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power"; Robert A. Dahl, "Dahl, Robert A., The Concept of Power", *Behavioral Science*, 2:3 (1957:July), *Behavioral Science* 2, no. 3 (1957): 201–15.

⁷ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics*, 5.

power is not based that much on power resources (strength) such as the power to punish (based on military resources) and the power to reward (economic power resources). Soft power is strategic and it draws from discourses outside the user of soft power. These discourses give positive or negative connotations to various characteristics in politics, culture, or economic interaction. For example, if a country cannot avoid the association between its cooperation in development and the discourse of manipulative colonial practices of interference, that country cannot present its cooperation regarding development in a good light. Such a country's soft-power strategies thus fail to make its aid policies look attractive, and it thus fails to influence other countries' attitudes towards its aid.

In some cases, aid, investments, or trade can be used as a "carrot" to change the aid/investment recipient's behavior by rewarding wanted behavior. However, aid, trade, and investments can also be tools of soft power if their purpose is not to reward, but to create a positive image of the donor and thus influence the recipient's attitudes.⁸ Thus when trade, investments or aid have not just rewarded their recipients but have also affected attitudes and preferences, they have been means of soft power. We must also remember that aid, when used as reward to make the recipient do what the donor wants, does not always yield soft-power gains. On the contrary, conditional aid, trade, and investment are often seen as imperialism or hegemonism, which changes the recipient's perception of the donor in a negative way.

The insufficient attention given to ideas concerning structural power in American literature on soft power could be the subject of more critical attention. Actors' changes of preference cannot be understood unless one looks at the mutual constitution of preferences and identities in the structures of world politics. Even if one is interested in whether or not China seeks to change the preferences of countries with which it interacts, understanding how international structures shape identities and

⁸ Hongyi Lai, "Introduction: The Soft Power Concept and the Rising China.," in *Hongyi Lai & Yiyi Lu, Eds., China's Soft Power and International Relations* (Routledge, 2012), 8.

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7 preferences is important in assessing whether or not China's soft-power strategies have been
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9 successful. A might be able to make B do something that B would not do without A's intervention
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11 if, for example, A offered B an opportunity to gain some positive publicity by inviting it to
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13 participate in a peace process, thereby helping in the creation of B's image as a peacemaker, which
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15 might then ensure B's participation in a peace-supporting role in the future, and perhaps even
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17 reduce B's willingness to support or participate in aggression. Here, soft power works through the
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19 structural mechanisms of power, but nevertheless offers A a way of getting B to do what A wants.
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21 This side of the analysis of power is understudied in the mainstream American analysis of Chinese
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23 power, and since the objective of this article is to identify where the American mainstream fails in
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25 its analysis, this article will not go into tracing the role played by the mutual constitution of
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27 identities and policies. Such a venture could be the next step after a critique of the mainstream
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29 American analysis. The interest of this article is to deconstruct, leaving the construction of a better
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31 analysis to the next phase.

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33 In addition to making his theory more structural (and less relational), Nye's soft-power analysis
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35 could be made more sensitive to the social construction of the realities that influence power. The
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37 assumption in current assessments (by Nye, Shambaugh and the Pew Global Attitudes Project
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39 studies) of Chinese soft power is that there are objective realities that can be manipulated by
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41 allocating rewards or imposing penalties, which in turn affect the preferences of those targeted.
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43 Nye's remarks about agenda formation as soft power suggest that it is possible to focus
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45 international attention on different elements in the objective environment that surrounds China, the
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47 U.S., and other international actors. However, as the example of peaceful policies and the identities
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49 of peacemakers already suggests, soft power can articulate interpretations that constitute and create
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51 social realities, which international actors then evaluate, and, in that sense, soft power has many
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53 options that go beyond the "attraction" that scholars of Chinese soft power talk about.
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The fact that our political imagination does not always reach beyond a setting in which a big power exerts soft power by attracting others to its ways, thereby making them follow it, is an example of the effectiveness of American soft power since the second World War . If soft power is seen solely in terms of the ability of a great power to attract other powers to follow its path, the “naturalness” of such a framing justifies the idea that great powers have to lead and attract others to adhere to their political and cultural norms. The U.S. rose to greatness by portraying itself as an anti-colonial alternative to previous intrusive European colonialism, a portrait that appealed to many nations. One might imagine such a power not being interested in attracting others to copy its democracy and culture, and one might think that it would allow others, including developing countries, to develop their own polities and ways of life. But if the natural way of soft power is attraction, then such an option would be unnatural and therefore the U.S. would not be criticized for its charm offensives aimed at persuading other sovereign countries to adopt its ways. The framing of soft power makes the policy of promoting specific political and cultural values, or a specific interpretation of democratic governance natural, and hides the fundamental contradiction such policies imply with respect to the principle of non-interference and respect for the sovereignty of all nations. However, again the absence of an analysis of the social construction of the social structures of international relations in the American analysis of Chinese strategies concerning power can be mentioned but cannot be developed in detail in an article that aims at the deconstruction of some of the contextualizations of the American analysis. The construction of a better theory of Chinese power will have to be the task of the next phase of research on this topic.

A misconceptualized analysis of power

The idea of soft power as the power of “attraction” is historically specific and belongs to the structure of international relations following the Second World War. In that historical bipolar arrangement the overriding feature was a global competition between governments that advocated a world revolution and governments that advocated global capitalism and national democracy. In

such a structure, soft power affected preferences (by means of attraction) regarding communism and capitalism. The greater attraction of capitalism was crucial to the costs of American power politics. Countries that saw communism as destructive were willing allies of the U.S. in the American effort to contain communism. Thus they were doing what the U.S. wanted them to do, and no reward or penalty was needed, or, if they were, less coercion or bribery was required, due to the attraction of the capitalist American way.

However, beyond a historically specific context, soft power can be anything that compels countries to do things that the user of soft power wants them to do. It is important to remember that outside the Cold War context, soft power does not necessarily mean that others want the same things that the exerciser of soft power wants. Quite the contrary, since China currently wants economic development, the logic of the structure of China's cooperation often requires that others must want the exact opposite of what China wants: in order to trade, others must want to buy what China wants to sell. Thus China has a vastly broader range of tools than simple attraction to make others do what it wants.

Opinion polls can be used to identify the kinds of soft power that are suitable for China, but we have to be careful when selecting the kinds of opinions we wish to analyze. Opinions that reveal the benefits to be gained from interacting with China are naturally useful for Chinese interests outside the historical context of the Cold War as China still wants to interact with other countries (especially with those it considers useful for its economy, security, etc.). However, whether people in other countries want Chinese culture, values, art, etc., to be emulated in their own country is irrelevant outside the Cold War context. During the Cold War a liberal democracy was likely to want to act as the United States wanted it to, since the dividing lines of the Cold War ran between the liberal democracies and other polities. However, in the current situation China needs others to accept Chinese values, culture, and visions as Chinese values, culture and visions, but China does not benefit from opinions and attitudes that indicate an interest in choosing the same values, culture,

and visions. Thus, while we can still assess the success of Chinese soft power by looking at opinion polls, we will have to read and interpret them differently to the way in which they have been interpreted by PEW, Shambaugh, Nye, the BBC and Ikenberry.

It is also possible to change countries' preferences in ways other than by simply attracting them: it is possible to change their framing of the premises of international decision making — framing the opportunities, outcomes, strategies and even the identities of the actors in world politics — in a way that leads to behavior that is useful and beneficial for the employer of soft power. However, this article focuses on the direct Chinese influence on the preferences of other regional and global powers rather on influence gained through the manipulation of framings. Yet, instead of accepting concepts that were born in the context of the Cold War, I will examine the kind of soft power that seeks directly to influence preferences in the context of the post-Cold-War world, a context in which China is aiming at something very different from the objectives of the U.S. during the Cold War.

The hegemonic and anti-hegemonic context of power

Theories of hegemonic leadership tend to emphasize the similarities between hegemonic cycles throughout recent history. This is understandable, as the idea of such theories is to draw generalizations from previous hegemonic cycles and apply them as predictions or heuristic tools in the analysis of subsequent hegemonic cycles. The fact that, with just one exception, hegemonic transitions have been violent justifies John Mearsheimer's prediction of the inevitable "battle of the titans," once China overtakes the United States in global might.⁹ It is likely that Shambaugh's, Nye's, and Ikenberry's arguments about the failure of Chinese power strategies are mainly intended to downplay Mearsheimerian alarmism with the suggestion that such a hegemonic transition might not take place in the foreseeable future.

⁹ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

However, despite some similarities, hegemonic cycles are also somewhat unique in their own right. US leadership in the third world did not involve direct colonization of underdeveloped societies as did British and European periods of hegemony. Yet we do not say that the US failed to colonize the third world during her period of hegemony.

To avoid direct force and control, U.S. soft power has aimed at securing American interests by ideological means.¹⁰ By means of soft power the U.S. has managed to shape the preferences of others.¹¹ Furthermore, it has been important for the U.S.'s global role that its soft-power policies managed to push forward its own global norms and interpretation of the world.¹² This was due to the fact that the bipolar structure of world politics was based on an ideological battle between communists and capitalists: a battle that concerned styles of domestic governance. In that context soft power meant not only persuading countries (governments), but also persuading ordinary people in other states. In order for the U.S. to ensure that other countries are favorable to its interests, their people must be made to have confidence in the American concept of freedom. Furthermore, American soft power has meant the creation of a union of supporters of the free world. Only by expanding the "free world" can the U.S. guarantee its security and leadership.¹³ Thus in the hegemonic context of the Cold War, power strategies had to be intrusive in the sense that they needed to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries by supporting democracy and capitalism. This was needed, on the one hand, to make countries act as the United States wanted them to act, and, on the other hand, to make them ally with the United States by joining the alliance

¹⁰ Jaime Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness and the Revolutionary Process*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

¹¹ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics*.

¹² Alan W. Cafruny, "The Gramscian Concept of Declining Hegemony: Stages of US Power and the Evolution of International Economic Relations," in David P. Rapkin, ed., *World Leadership and Hegemony. International Political Economy Yearbook, Vol. 5* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990), 97–118.

¹³ Jim A. Kuypers, *Presidential Crisis Rhetoric and the Press in the Post-Cold-War World* (New York: Praeger, 1997); Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (93 1992): 22–49.

of “the free world.” The kind of soft power that manipulates preferences in this kind of context will be called hegemonic in this article, due to the fact that such soft power not only aims at manipulating preferences about the relationship between the powerful country and its potential supporters, but also by intrusively manipulating domestic preferences.

Chinese foreign policy doctrine has set out a different kind of power strategy. The relationship between China and other countries, it declares, is to be based on equality and common interest rather than the promotion or imposition of Chinese ideologies and models of domestic governance. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence from 1954 emphasized this,¹⁴ while the Principles of Foreign Aid emphasize the same commitment to non-interference.¹⁵ In 2004 President Hu Jintao announced what he referred to as the “Four No’s,” two of them being directly relevant to China’s soft-power strategy: the first “No” was no to hegemony, and the third “No” was no to blocs.¹⁶ Since the Cultural Revolution, China has reaffirmed its commitment to anti-hegemonism and this, in official Chinese parlance, has meant refraining from imposing Chinese ideas relating to domestic administration on other countries.¹⁷ The doctrine of peaceful rise also simply involves convincing others of the usefulness of mutually beneficial economic state-to-state cooperation with China.¹⁸

China’s international power strategy has changed recently, but it has not become hegemonic, at least not in a way that is reflected in its declarations. On the one hand, new Chinese declarations

¹⁴ “Five Principles of Peaceful Cooperation.” (United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 299, United Nation, June 3, 1954), <http://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20299/v299.pdf>.

¹⁵ “Zhou Enlai Announces Eight Principles of Foreign Aid,” accessed July 18, 2013, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-08/13/content_11149131.htm.

¹⁶ Giovanni Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing*. (London: Verso, 2008).

¹⁷ Xiaoping Deng, “We Shall Concentrate On Economic Development. September 18, 1982.,” *Talk With Kim Il Sung, General Secretary Of The Central Committee Of The Korean Workers’ Party*. Available at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol3/text/c1030.html>, 1982; *ibid*.

¹⁸ Jianyong Yue, “Peaceful Rise of China: Myth or Reality?,” *International Politics* 45, no. 4 (July 2008): 439–56, doi:10.1057/ip.2008.13; Jaewoo Choo, “Ideas Matter: China’s Peaceful Rise,” *Asia Europe Journal* 7, no. 3–4 (December 1, 2009): 389–404, “Full Text: China’s Peaceful Development,” 2011, http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-09/06/content_1941354.htm.

have shown that in addition to economic growth China has started to seek *National Rejuvenation*. According to Yan Xuetong,¹⁹ this has meant a move away from the doctrine of *Keeping a Low Profile*, introduced by Deng Xiaoping,²⁰ to the doctrine of *Striving for Achievement*, explained in speeches by the Foreign Minister Wang Yi²¹ and President Xi Jinping.²² According to Yan Xuetong, this will emphasize Chinese power interests; it will inevitably introduce a competition between the United States and China, and it will require that a new emphasis be given to the image of China in the world.²³ However, even if China now needs political power to complement its economic growth, and even though China now needs a positive image to sustain its power and economic growth, this does not mean that China needs hegemonic soft power (=power to manipulate preferences related to domestic affairs), and thus China's soft power should not be judged as if it is needed for the promotion of its hegemonic ideology or hegemonic position, as the existing analyses of Chinese soft power by Shambaugh, Nye, Ikenberry, and the PEW institute suggest. China's soft power is not targeted at selling Chinese culture and a way of life that others are to apply, but, instead, the main focus of Chinese soft power is in the development of relationships, so that China together with its important friends can find ways to achieve mutually beneficial cooperation. Typical examples of this can be found in the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (<http://www.focac.org/eng/>) or in the China-ECLAC Forum between China and the UN-based Economic Commission for Latin America. The influencing of other countries preferences in Chinese soft power is not to sell the Chinese way but to sell cooperation

¹⁹ Yan Xuetong, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement," *Unpublished Paper*, 2014.

²⁰ Xiaoping Deng, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping Volume III (1982-1992)*, (<http://english.cpcnews.cn/206216/7999713.html>: People's Daily, undated), 350.

²¹ Yi Wang, "Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, June 27, 2013), <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1053908.shtml>.

²² Jinping Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries," October 24, 2013, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1093870.shtml>.

²³ Xuetong, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement"; Yan Xuetong, "The Weakening of the Unipolar Configuration," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, November 14, 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/11/14/weakening-of-unipolar-configuration/eij8>.

with China. Thus Chinese soft power is not hegemonic but relational. This is clearly stated both in the speech of President Xi Jinping and in that of Foreign Minister Wang Yi.²⁴ However, this approach to Chinese soft power has been confused with a hegemonic approach by the presence of a few concepts that make the anti-hegemonic commitment of Chinese soft power look somewhat fuzzy.

The first of the new ideas that have sometimes been confused with hegemonism concerns the question of why China needs a positive image and soft power to foster it. Owing to the growth of its economic might, China has needed to take into account the security and economic needs of other countries to make its growth sustainable: “if China’s development cannot be shared by the world, its development will surely be unsustainable.”²⁵ The attitudes of others are thus important for China’s growth, as well as for China’s power.²⁶ In this sense, China can no longer keep the low profile of the past. China needs to show that it places morality above selfish self-interest if it is to gain the good will of others. This good will is also needed to sustain its economic growth as well as its political power. In the words of Foreign Minister Wang Yi, “we emphasize both morality and interests in our exchanges with other developing countries and we put morality before interests. This is an important reason why China’s diplomacy has gained extensive support.” Does this then mean that China has become a hegemonic power that sells its image, interpretations, and values, and thus needs a similar kind of soft power to that of the United States? In other words does China need hegemonic soft power? I argue that it does not, as the morality China emphasizes above interests is not a morality that China would like to impose on or sell to others.

²⁴ Xi Jinping, “Work Together to Maintain World Peace and Security. Address by Vice President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China At the Opening Ceremony of the World Peace Forum.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, July 7, 2012), <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/wshd/t951973.htm>; Wang, “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum”; Xi Jinping, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”

²⁵ Wang, “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum.”

²⁶ Xuetong, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement.”

The concept of the Chinese Dream, launched by President Xi Jinping, has also occasionally been interpreted as a hegemonic project that is designed to export a Chinese Dream just as the U.S. has exported the American Dream. Xi Jinping did mention in his very important speech on foreign policy that he wanted to spread China's voice, and integrate the Chinese dream with the desires of the people of neighboring countries.²⁷ There is no doubt that the idea of integrating a Chinese dream with the dreams of others can be interpreted as a hegemonic project. In fact it has been interpreted as such by famous philosophers,²⁸ and hegemonic interpretations have also been presented by the *People's Daily*.²⁹ When explaining how the Chinese Dream was important for the whole world, how other countries are also enthusiastic about the Chinese Dream, and how the Chinese Dream shapes the world, President Xi Jinping's concept was used in a way that was similar to the way in which the concept of the American Dream was used to impose hegemonic values and dreams on other sovereign countries. Assuming that one's own values are universal and that one's own dreams are the dreams of others, introduces, as can be seen in Truman's statements about the American Dream,³⁰ the "arrogance of power" and turns a country into a hegemonic nation.³¹

However, if one examines Xi Jinping's use of the concept more closely, it becomes clear that this dream could also be interpreted as something purely domestic, while its promotion internationally is

²⁷ Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries."

²⁸ Zhao Tingyang, "Rethinking Empire from the Chinese Concept 'All Under Heaven'," in William A. Callahan and Elena Barabantseva Ed., *China Orders the World. Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*. (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press & Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 54–88.

²⁹ Xinhua, "'Chinese Dream' to Benefit World - People's Daily Online," March 5, 2013, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8154491.html>; "World Also Needs 'Chinese Dream' - People's Daily Online," December 5, 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8045705.html>; "Chinese Dream to Shape Global Landscape: Foreign Experts - People's Daily Online," December 8, 2013, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8477893.html>; "Chinese Dream: Necessary for Both China and the World - People's Daily Online," February 7, 2013, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90785/8126122.html>.

³⁰ Harry S Truman, "Statement by the President on the Death of David K. Niles," September 28, 1952, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14267&st=American+Dream&st1=>.

³¹ J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963); Susan Ann Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

simply an attempt to have domestic Chinese aspirations accepted by the international community.³²

When President Xi Jinping says that the Chinese Dream has to be integrated into the dreams of other nations,³³ he makes a distinction between different dreams, rather than suggesting that the integration could be done by selling or imposing the Chinese Dream to or on others. Instead of describing partisan visions, President Xi Jinping said that the “equality” of nations and the “respect of sovereign rights of nations” is part of the Chinese Dream.³⁴ Furthermore, he characterized the principles according to which the dreams of countries have to be “integrated” by using concepts that clearly distinguish the Chinese dream from imposing hegemonic concepts: “A country which pursues its own development, security and well-being must also let other countries pursue their development, security and well-being. All countries must take a cooperative approach with an innovative spirit and responsible attitude, stand together and seek win-win cooperation to resolve various problems and challenges, and foster a harmonious and stable international and regional security environment.”³⁵

Thus, the Chinese Dream is not to be imposed on other countries. On the contrary, it is China’s dream, which will have to be adjusted to the equally important dreams of other nations in order to find ways to promote “mutual gains” and “mutual benefit.”³⁶ This is the normative starting point of China’s new foreign policy. Despite its economic and political growth and rejuvenation, China’s expanding of power does not, at least on a reading of its declarations, confuse power with hegemonic ambitions. The distinction between the two has been explained by Yan Xuetong in his analysis of the Chinese realist concept of morality in international relations: “For moral realism,

³² Xiaoying Qin, “The Chinese Dream vs. The American Dream | CHINA US Focus,” April 27, 2013, <http://www.chinausfocus.com/political-social-development/the-chinese-dream-vs-the-american-dream/>.

³³ Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Xi, “Work Together to Maintain World Peace and Security. Address by Vice President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China At the Opening Ceremony of the World Peace Forum.”

³⁶ Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries.”

foreign policies featuring self-disciplined morality aim at obtaining more international support besides a moral image. Regarding the political moral principles that China proposed to the international community, Xi Jinping told Chinese officials: ‘We should first practice those ideas ourselves.’³⁷ The interpretation of the Foreign Minister of China is the same and explicitly repeats Deng Xiaoping’s concept of anti-hegemonism in the new environment of national rejuvenation: “we must advocate equality between all countries regardless of their size and promote democracy in international relations. It means that we must reject any law of the jungle, oppose any form of hegemonism, oppose the big, the strong and the rich bullying the small, the weak and the poor, and oppose interference in other countries’ internal affairs.”³⁸ Thus to say that Chinese greatness and national rejuvenation could be a dream similar to the American one, which is related to the American way of life, is not convincing.

The strategy of justifying China’s rise is associated with anti-hegemonism and this difference between the United States and China is so much part of Chinese diplomatic identity that even if China’s political elite wanted to change course on this, it would have tremendous difficulties in doing so. Even according to scholars that emphasize China’s power-interests, Chinese morality is self-restraining and has power-implications only in so far as it gives legitimacy for China’s use of power in international relations. Thus, while Chinese soft power should make other countries tolerant and supportive of China’s right to its dreams, it does not need to make the Chinese Dream attractive for others to adopt. Thus Chinese soft power should not be measured by the attractiveness of Chinese values, dreams, and culture as opinion polls have done when measuring the degree to which people from other countries like Chinese culture, music, political system, etc., as such. Other citizens do not need to have similar values, they do not need to want Chinese values for themselves, they just need to appreciate that the Chinese Dream and Chinese values are acceptable for China.

³⁷ Xuetong, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement.”

³⁸ Wang, “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum.”

However, the concept of the Chinese Dream is not the only concept that has been interpreted as a sign of hegemonism in Chinese foreign policy doctrine. China also launches or promotes concepts like the Chinese Model or the Beijing Consensus that seem to be designed to attract developing countries to some economic ideas that China has developed for itself.³⁹ On closer inspection, it seems, however, that the function of concepts like the Beijing consensus and the Chinese Model are simply designed to counter the imposition of the hegemonic neoliberal Washington consensus, and offer developing countries an alternative model. After all the Chinese Model and the Beijing Consensus are concepts that describe China's own line and perhaps also China's preferred way of engaging in economic cooperation. If one looks at how these concepts have been used, the first thing one realizes is that they are introduced by an American scholar associated with the consulting firm of former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.⁴⁰ Thus the origin of the concept is not Chinese. However, when the Beijing Consensus is analyzed by an academic with a Chinese name the concept is used as an explanatory, rather than as a normative concept.⁴¹ The Beijing Consensus is operationalized as a model that explains China's economic success. Alternatively it is simply used as the name for the Chinese economic approach. Then the concept is simply used as a normatively neutral name rather than something that needs to be made attractive by using soft power.⁴² Unlike the USA, which used soft power and aid and sometimes even military might, to promote liberal economic principles in other countries, there are no political declarations promoting

³⁹ Zhang Weiwei, "The Allure of the Chinese Model," *International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 2006.

⁴⁰ Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus* (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2004).

⁴¹ E.K.Y. Chen, "Asian Capitalism: Beijing Consensus as an Economic Development Model for the 21st Century," *Asian Responses to the Global Financial Crisis: The Impact of Regionalism and the Role of the G20*, 2012, 24; Yasheng Huang, "Chinomics: The Fallacy of the Beijing Consensus," *The Wall Street Journal Asia*, June 21, 2010, 13; Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, "In Search of China's Developmental Model: Beyond the Beijing Consensus," *Journal of International & Global Studies* 3, no. 2 (2012): 113–16.

⁴² Yang Yao, "Beijing Consensus or Washington Consensus," *Development Outreach*, April 2011, Vol.13(1), pp.26-31 13, no. 1 (2011): 26–31; Nai-ji Lu, "Beijing Consensus vs. Washington Consensus," *Dongbei Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban)/Journal of Northeastern University (Social Science)* 8, no. 1 (January 2006): 42; X. Li, "Redefining Beijing Consensus: Ten Economic Principles," ed. K.E. Brødsgaard and M. Jacobsen, *China Economic Journal*, 2, no. 3 (March 2010): 297–311.

the Beijing Consensus as a Chinese model that other countries should adopt. The Washington Consensus was a set of agreements that consolidated the power of the United States in international economic and financial institutions. These agreements were founded on the attractiveness of the economic model preferred by the United States. Thus while the attractiveness of the Washington economic model needed to be boosted for American interests, the Beijing Model does not really have any relationship to Chinese interests, and thus Chinese soft power does not need to promote the attractiveness of the Chinese economic model. Yet, China did use the concept of the Beijing Consensus as the name for an agreement signed in September 2011 by the BRICS countries.⁴³ However, the agreement on economic cooperation between the BRICS countries did not impose an economic formula on its members. On the contrary, the domestic economic policies of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are vastly different. Thus, the Beijing Consensus does not challenge the idea that China subscribes consistently to an anti-hegemonic set of foreign policy objectives. Moreover, the context of China's soft power is one in which China does not need to attract other countries to China's domestic economic ways.

The fact that China invests heavily in the promotion of its culture by funding Confucius Institutes even in developed countries also appears to challenge the argument, proposed by this article, that China's soft power does not need to promote the attractiveness of China's economic or political formula, or its culture. Xi Jinping's explanation of Chinese foreign policy in October 2013, however, suggests that even this is not designed to promote Chinese culture as such, but rather an understanding of Chinese culture in other countries. President Xi Jinping explained the need for cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges as part of the Chinese aim of "letting the awareness of a community of common destiny take root in the neighbouring countries."⁴⁴

⁴³ BBC, "BRICS Nations Sign Beijing Consensus to Fight Financial Crisis," *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, September 21, 2011, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/892967547/fulltext/embedded/SFLFVWT816H6W710?source=fedsrch>; Peoples Daily, "BRIC Nations Sign Beijing Consensus - People's Daily Online," September 22, 2011, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7602405.html>.

⁴⁴ Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries."

Confucian culture is very China specific and would not be the first thing China would try to impose on foreign cultures if it had hegemonic objectives. To say that Confucius Institutes are seeking to convert Europeans and Americans to Confucianism would not be convincing. Thus it is likely that Confucius Institutes are in the business of promoting understanding, rather than selling the Chinese language or culture to others. In this way, Chinese soft power will not have to focus on the attractiveness of Chinese culture, but on increasing the understanding among other countries of Chinese culture. This is clearly different to Cold War policies whereby both the Soviet Union, and, especially, the United States were eagerly selling their own culture, values, language, etc., and thus needed their culture to look attractive.

Assessing Anti-Hegemonic Soft Power

As shown above, China’s peaceful rise does not need the societies of other countries to change or that the people of these other societies share Chinese values and admire China’s culture. Neither does China aim at hegemonic Confucian alliances against other powers. Whether China needs alliances at all is disputed, and probably depends on what we mean by alliances.⁴⁵ Yet, there are no disagreements on the fact that in the current historical context China does not need to seek alliances by proving the attraction of Chinese culture, science, etc. This is why Chinese soft power, for the purpose of China’s peaceful rise, has no interest in demonstrating the virtues of Chinese society or its type of governance.⁴⁶ The fact that Chinese soft power has not focused on persuading other societies to adopt Chinese social or economic values – as expressed in the conclusion of a PEW study that China’s soft-power promotion of Chinese TV, technology, and music, etc., has “failed” – only shows that this declaratory commitment has some validity in the Chinese strategy of soft power.

⁴⁵ Yan Xuetong claims that China does (Xuetong, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement.”) while Choo Jaewoo suggests that China does not (Choo, “Ideas Matter”).

⁴⁶ “Full Text: China’s Peaceful Development.”

China's rise is not taking place in the context of a competition between different political systems. As a result, China does not need to attract other powers to its political or economic system. Countries are not going to yield to Chinese demands, even if they were attracted to the Chinese political system. Similarly, countries are not destined to oppose China, if they subscribe to a different formula of domestic governance. Instead, countries do what China wants them to do in terms of trade, that is, sell their oil and gas to China – but only if they want to, or are persuaded to do so. Chinese soft power aims at affecting their preferences with regards to, for example, selling oil to China, rather than with regards to Confucian values. China's political system or culture is irrelevant to China's global ambitions. Political systems or cultures are not relevant to global coalitions either, as coalitions are not likely to form around certain positions taken on questions about the types of political systems (as was the case during the cold war). Furthermore, the attractiveness or otherwise of China's political or economic system would not help it to form alliances. China does not need or want to sell its form of government, its economic wisdom, or its way of life. Thus, because this has not happened in China's case, one should not conclude that this is due to any failed attempts to do so in the recent past. The assumption is that Nye's and Shambaugh's analysis of China's global rise is based on an inappropriate derivation of the goals and concepts used in the context of American cold war leadership.

If instead of considering China's soft power capabilities in terms of U.S. values, we compare China's strategies against its own values and objectives, we may see a different pattern of success. Furthermore, if we look at soft-power needs in the context of today, instead of looking at the soft-power requirements of the cold war, China's strategies no longer seem to be failures. The structural factor common to both Chinese and U.S. strength in the current context has been both powers' dependence on imported energy resources for growth. President George W. Bush admitted that the

United States is addicted to oil,⁴⁷ while some analysts have predicted that China’s need for imported energy will be so pressing hat it could make the country compromise its foreign policy principles of anti-hegemonism.⁴⁸

A form of soft power that could cater to this need for growth would shape the preferences of oil producers in such a way that trade and favorable prices might be possible. In fact, such soft power can be measured by opinion polls, if one reinterprets them and makes one adjustment to the data. The success or failure of Chinese soft power in support of its energy security is evident in the data on other countries’ attitudes to China and the U.S. provided by PEW, if we add a dummy variable to the data revealing whether or not the country is a net oil exporter. Table 1 shows the average percentages of respondents having a favorable attitude towards China and America:

Table 1: Favorable attitudes in oil-producing countries and non-oil-producing countries

	Favorable towards the U.S.	Favorable towards China	Difference in U.S. favor
Oil exporters	49.3%	66.1%	-16.9%
Non-exporters	60.2%	49.6%	10.5%

It is evident from the table that China is seen favorably by roughly two-thirds of the population in oil-exporting countries, while less than half perceive the U.S. positively. Among oil-importing countries, the U.S. is viewed positively by over 60%, while China is viewed favorably by less than 50%. China is 17% more popular in oil-exporting countries and 11% less popular in oil-importing countries. This suggests that while America’s soft power promotes the U.S. in general, Chinese soft power is more targeted. It aims at promoting the perception that there are benefits and opportunities from collaborating with China and thus targets countries with which China actually collaborates. Instead of being able to build ideological coalitions, China’s soft power has managed to shape preferences for crucially important business partnerships. Furthermore, Chinese business practices

⁴⁷ Richard A. Lovett, “‘Addicted to Oil’: How Can U.S. Fulfill Bush Pledge?,” *National Geographic News*, February 14, 2006, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/02/0214_060214_bush_oil.html.

⁴⁸ Ian Taylor, *China’s New Role in Africa*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2009).

are liked in general, particularly in places where China has expanding business interests, such as Africa.⁴⁹

If we add yet another variable to the PEW data, namely, the recent expansion of Chinese investments, we also find a strong correlation between expanding economic ties and favorable opinions of China. According to Kurlantzick's reading of China's five-year development plans, China defines North Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America as the areas of most rapidly increasing value for its development.⁵⁰ China is seen most favorably in Africa and in Latin America, where its economic ties have grown most dramatically, and it is much more favorably viewed in Central Asia than the U.S. However, China has not managed to compete with the U.S. in the West, despite its crucial economic interests there. Yet in areas such as Southern Europe, where Chinese investments have drastically increased, perceptions of China have become very positive. Spain and Greece are the two countries in the region most favorable towards China, while they, too, are the countries where the economic position of China has increased the most.⁵¹

If we look at the profile of favorable attitudes in the PEW data, it is also possible to see that China is weak in the variables measuring the expansiveness of Chinese political,⁵² cultural,⁵³ and economic values,⁵⁴ but very strong in the variables that demonstrate how countries feel about trading with China or about having diplomatic relations with China.⁵⁵ This could be interpreted as a sign of success for China's anti-hegemonic form of soft power. Even in the U.S.'s own neighborhood, namely, Latin America, only the people of Brazil and El Salvador thought that the economic influence of America was more favorable than that of China while in all the other Latin American countries studied people viewed Chinese influence as more positive.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ Andrew Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's," *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, July 18, 2013, 28, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/07/18/americas-global-image-remains-more-positive-than-chinas/>.

⁵⁰ Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive. How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 91.

⁵¹ Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's"; BBC World Service, "BBC Country Rating Poll: Views of China and India Slide While UK's Ratings Climb: Global Poll," May 22, 2013, <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/2013%20Country%20Rating%20Poll.pdf>.

⁵² "Ideas on democracy", "Ideas and customs spreading" and perceptions of China's "Respect of personal freedoms of China's own citizens".

⁵³ "Music, movies and television."

⁵⁴ Perceptions of China's universities and technology.

⁵⁵ "Influence on country in general" and "Influence on country's economy."

⁵⁶ Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's," 38.

It is also interesting to see that despite the fact that China's economic influence was generally viewed as very positive in most countries, the U.S. was more often seen as "considering my country's interest" than China.⁵⁷ This, too, demonstrates the difference between the benevolent hegemon, the U.S., and the anti-hegemon, China. While China emphasizes equality and mutual interest, and is thus economically beneficial for its partners, it is still not perceived as considerate of its partners' interests in the sense of "taking care of other countries". This does not constitute a failure of Chinese soft power since China, as an anti-hegemonic power, does not try to "take care" of other countries' interest. When China does business and even when China offers help in the resolution of conflicts inside another country,⁵⁸ China emphasizes its own interests and relies on the idea that where cooperation takes place among equals the negotiating partners will manage to take care of their own interests. The concept is to integrate China's dreams with other countries' dreams. China does not explicitly declare an interest in respecting other countries' interests, or a wish to "take care" of the interests of others.

The strategy of limiting hard and soft power to areas where it can respect the principle of non-interference has been a winning strategy. America's most extreme hard-power strategy of interference in domestic affairs, the use of drone strikes, seems to be its main soft-power liability. While it might have positive military consequences it erodes America's positive image in the world. What is worse is that this liability is souring America's relations with precisely those countries where good relations most needed, namely, the oil-producers (important for U.S. economic power) and with countries most crucial to America's strategic interests (i.e., those dealing with terrorism).⁵⁹

China, due to its anti-hegemonism, has no drones operating over foreign territories. Restraint in hard-power politics yields soft power. Thus Foreign Minister Wang's ideas of the relationship between morality and selfish interest could strengthen Chinese soft power.⁶⁰ Yet, there are limits to

⁵⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁵⁸ When peace negotiations between the Kachin Independence Organization and the government of Myanmar were hosted by China from January 2012 until June 2013, the arrangement was not motivated by China's commitment to the global values that it promoted, but instead, China's interest in securing its own gas and oil pipelines that ran across the battlefields were explicitly exposed as a Chinese motive for offering its good services. The China National Petroleum Corporation even paid part of the Chinese contribution concerning this conflict resolution (the author of this article has worked as a consultant in the Chinese attempt to offer its good services, and these impressions are immediate observations from that process).

⁵⁹ Kohut, "America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's," 14–15.

⁶⁰ Wang, "Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum."

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7 this strategy. In some cases hard power already weakens soft power as countries and citizens
8 perceive powerful countries with suspicion. This can be seen even in opinion polls, as there tends to
9 be a weak negative correlation between the perception of China's emerging position as the world's
10 most powerful country and the favorable attitude towards China.⁶¹ Power does not attract favor
11 even for China, even though its power is not viewed with as much suspicion as that of the U.S. Yet
12 countries where China is portrayed as powerful also see China as threatening and this means
13 relations with China are seen unfavorably.
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17 With increasing hard power, especially with increasing economic might, China is also affecting the
18 domestic correlation of forces of its partners, and this necessarily harms some while benefiting
19 others. Despite its doctrine of anti-hegemonism, China cannot always avoid influencing other
20 countries' domestic affairs. This seems to support the new Chinese approach in which China needs
21 to negotiate and integrate its economic growth with the development goals of its neighbors, in order
22 to avoid a situation where Chinese economic growth will become a liability to Chinese soft power.⁶²
23 This integration will not be problem-free, though. Whatever China does it will affect the domestic
24 situation in neighboring countries, and this will result in China making new enemies (as well as
25 friends, of course). The fact that China tends to deal with ruling elites is a safe choice for its soft
26 power, as they, self-evidently, are the ones that rule. However, if ruling elites change in autocratic
27 countries, the new rulers might be people that the previous ruling elite – which China might have
28 helped – had harshly repressed. Kurlantzick sees this as a major challenge for Chinese soft power,
29 particularly in Myanmar where huge energy infrastructure investments have been made in
30 cooperation with the autocratic military regime. Now that the country may democratize, those
31 whom “China once helped keep in prison” may emerge as the winners of the domestic political
32 battle.⁶³
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40 With its increasing economic power and globalizing interests, China's anti-hegemonism will also be
41 challenged by the globalization of its national interests. In the 2004 White Paper on China's
42 Defense,⁶⁴ China for the first time, hinted at the possibility of defending its economic interests
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47 ⁶¹ Kohut, “America's Global Image Remains More Positive than China's.”

48 ⁶² Xi, “Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries”; Wang,
49 “Exploring the Path of Major-Country Diplomacy With Chinese Characteristics. Remarks by Foreign Minister Wang Yi
50 At the Luncheon of the Second World Peace Forum.”
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52 ⁶³ Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive. How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World.*, 205.

53 ⁶⁴ “China's Defense White Paper: A New Conceptual Framework for Security” (The Jamestown Foundation, April 25,
54 2013),
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militarily. It remains to be seen what this means, but if it involves military operations outside China's own territory in defense of its economic interests this cannot bode well for fostering goodwill towards China, let alone its commitment to anti-hegemonism and anti-imperialism.

In some areas, respecting others' sovereignty, as an anti-hegemonic power should, is very difficult for China. In two of its neighboring countries, Japan and the Philippines, people favorable towards China are a small minority,⁶⁵ despite the fact that China has focused its soft power especially on creating goodwill among neighboring countries.⁶⁶ This unpopularity is a genuine soft power problem and not just a pseudo issue of China's own culture or way of life not being popular. This unpopularity affects the way these countries conduct their political and economic relations with China. The problem Chinese soft power has with regards to Japan and the Philippines may be due to the fact that despite its non-hegemonic stand, China's maritime territorial disputes with Vietnam, Japan, and the Philippines prevent it from respecting the sovereignty of these countries in territories Vietnam, Japan and the Philippines perceive as their own. In the East China Sea and in the South China Sea, China cannot avoid a hegemonic image in areas where there are disputes about the ownership of maritime territories. While China tries to build acceptance towards its globalizing role by showing that it is not a hegemon like the United States, it cannot be seen as a legitimate anti-hegemonic power, as from the Japanese perspective it does not respect the sovereignty of Japan over the islands that Japan calls Senkaku (Diaoyu). The same is true for the Philippines with regards to China's policies in almost the entire Spratly archipelago and in the Paracel Islands with Vietnam (even though the impact of the dispute with Vietnam on Vietnamese attitudes has not been verified by the main international opinion polls to which Shambaugh, Nye, Ikenberry and others refer).

It is difficult to say whether the political power objectives related to China's national rejuvenation have pushed China into a position in relation to these disputed maritime territories that might result in costs for Chinese soft power. Perhaps, where anti-hegemonism fails, China could show in practice what the primacy of peaceful morality over self-interest means and show how shelving disputes, avoiding the exercise and threat of violence could win some goodwill for China.

[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=40784&cHash=7cdb20872966140532416d3f7eafe6fd](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=40784&cHash=7cdb20872966140532416d3f7eafe6fd).

⁶⁵ BBC World Service, "BBC Country Rating Poll: Views of China and India Slide While UK's Ratings Climb: Global Poll."

⁶⁶ Xi, "Let the Sense of Community of Common Destiny Take Deep Root in Neighbouring Countries."

A Chinese way to contribute to peaceful solutions in world affairs?

The anti-hegemonic approach that characterizes China's soft power also characterizes China's approach to global governance. For the sake of national rejuvenation, China does need power, but its exercise of power in global governance does not need to comply with the patterns of the Cold War and the patterns of the U.S.'s approach to global governance. To understand why the mainstream American analysis of Chinese power has ended up concluding that China has failed and that China remains a partial power one can once again point to the problems that arise from using the American measuring stick for assessing China's policies. China's global power strategy does not serve American interests and thus it does not need to have the same capacities and strengths as America's global power strategy. But the roots of the confusion are deeper. They are to be found in the American neo-liberal institutionalist way of perceiving global governance and its problems. We will need to identify the problematic assumptions of the mainstream analysis of China's global strategy of power to come to a fair assessment.

In the neo-liberal institutionalist writings of Robert Keohane, Harvey Starr, Dean Pruitt, Joseph Nye, and Robert Axelrod, problems of international cooperation have been approached by using the famous game theory model of the prisoner's dilemma as a structure for cooperation.⁶⁷ In this structure, cooperation is challenged either by the fear of being left with a "suckers payoff" (payoff for an actor that cooperates in good faith while the other player deceives him/her and exploits the naiveté of the actor), or with the temptation to leave the others with one.⁶⁸ This combination of fear and temptation make an uncooperative strategy individually rational, but also leaves both parties

⁶⁷ The structure of the prisoner's dilemma can be illustrated with the following anecdote: "Two prisoners, held incommunicado, are charged with the same crime. They can be convicted only if either confesses... if one confesses, he is set free for having turned state's evidence and is given a reward to boot. The prisoner who has held out is convicted ... and is given a more severe sentence than if he had also confessed." (Rapoport, Anatol. *Prisoner's Dilemma: A Study in Conflict and Cooperation*. University of Michigan Press, 1965: 24-25).

⁶⁸ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Harvard University Press, 2009).

worse off, when both follow what might be, individually, a rational strategy. Examples of this have been discussed in the debate on burden sharing in global governance and policing.⁶⁹

In addition to questions of burden sharing in global policing, the model of the prisoners' dilemma has been used in the analysis of various "global problems," such as finding a solution to the insistence of Iran to develop its nuclear capabilities. If the prevention of nuclear proliferation was a common goal, actions against such a goal can be seen as socially irrational "uncooperative behavior," even if rational for those particular nations willing to get the upper hand by secretly acquiring nuclear weapons⁷⁰.

Neo-liberal institutionalists have found a way out of the dilemma posed by structures of interaction that can be characterized as prisoners' dilemmas – a super-strategy. If the United States and other responsible powers simply insisted on reciprocity, others would have an incentive to cooperate. In this super-strategy, the United States will act in a reciprocal cooperative manner vis-à-vis those that are cooperative towards the United States. Therefore, the incentive to leave others with the suckers' payoff will be evened out by the prospect of future reciprocation ("shadow of the future"): if a country is uncooperative now, it will be met with an uncooperative attitude in the future.⁷¹

The interpretation of problems of international cooperation in terms of the prisoners' dilemma has been largely adopted by much of the American body politic and used in its rhetoric. The idea of offsetting the temptation to free ride in global governance by means of a super-strategy of reciprocity has been explicitly used in US policies towards China.⁷²

⁶⁹ Harvey Starr, *Anarchy, Order, and Integration: How to Manage Interdependence* (University of Michigan Press, 2000).

⁷⁰ N. S. Sisodia and Ashok K. Behuria, *West Asia in Turmoil: Implications for Global Security* (Academic Foundation, 2007).

⁷¹ Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation: Revised Edition* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1985).

⁷² John Dumbrell, *Clinton's Foreign Policy: Between the Bushes, 1992-2000* (Routledge, 2009), 116. It has been claimed, though, that the super-strategy of reciprocity cannot be applied in the war on terror, and, as a result, George W.

Shambaugh uses the logic of the prisoner's dilemma implicitly in his analysis of Chinese global politics. When talking about China's lack of direct involvement in global governance, Shambaugh talks about "calls to contribute more to global "public goods" and about the accusation of China "being a "free rider" in the global system.⁷³ He concludes that instead of supporting the "coalitions of the willing", China opts for passivity or resistance towards solutions in order to avoid the burden of responsibility for global policing and governance.⁷⁴ China's "full moral integration into the international system remains a work-in-progress."⁷⁵ Nye, as one of the main theorists of neo-liberal institutionalism is even clearer about his use of the free-rider metaphor. Yet, Nye is also more critical about US hegemonic projects and thus he does not equate China's non-participation in US hegemonic operations with free riding.⁷⁶ Yet, Nye too feels that China's lack of any kind of norm-setting for and offering of a public role to the world community is problematic. If every power did this, and opted to avoid responsibility, the world would be left without governance and policing, and would lapse into the anarchy that is its natural state. However, both the interpretation that U.S. or Chinese policies towards global problems can be analyzed as reciprocal super-strategies towards problems perceived in terms of the prisoners' dilemma, and the applicability of the prisoners' dilemma in the analysis of global cooperation is questionable.

The setting of a problem whose analysis is structured in terms of the prisoners' dilemma requires that the starting point for the uncooperative response by any coalition of the willing (that China decided not to join) had to be one in which the rogue state failed to cooperate. However, it turned out that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction, and thus Iraq was actually cooperating and

Bush has made an exception to the US foreign policy tradition of reciprocity Mark Osiel, *The End of Reciprocity: Terror, Torture, and the Law of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁷³ Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 8–9, 306.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 153.

⁷⁶ Nye, "Think Again."

in compliance with its non-proliferation treaty (NPT) obligations when the US decided to “reciprocate” with an uncooperative strategy. In Iran the issue of whether the country is developing nuclear weapons is also questioned. Joining sanctions or military action as a way of “reciprocating” any perceived lack of cooperation would not necessarily fit the neo-liberal institutionalist formula for the promotion of global cooperation.

If we criticize China’s policies towards the main global security problems for being policies that sabotage the strategy of reciprocity of coalitions of the willing, then we must be able to establish that in these issues the United States has been cooperative to start with. Reciprocating uncooperative strategies with uncooperative responses will not work, if the United States and the coalitions of the willing were also uncooperative at the outset.⁷⁷ If we look at disputes between the United States and Iran, about Iran’s failure to comply with the norms of non-proliferation, then the validity of the United State’s initial position can also be called into question. When the United States started to push Iran towards changing its nuclear policies, the bone of contention was the so-called “Additional Protocol” of the non-proliferation treaty. The United States did not accuse Iran of being in non-compliance with the treaty itself, but, instead, the United States wanted Iran to ratify a modified treaty that was related to more intrusive verification procedures, the so-called Additional Protocol agreed by the IAEA’s Board of Governors in 1997. This protocol is voluntary and still only about two thirds of the signatories of the NPT have actually ratified this protocol, and it is in force in about half of the NPT signatory countries. Thus, the “failure to ratify” was not really a failure to comply with a mutually accepted norm, but instead, the application of pressure on Iran to ratify what was more of an *ad hoc* necessity for underpinning regional security. At the time, the United States had ratified the protocol, but it took a decade before it changed its legislation to comply with the stipulations of the protocol. In this sense, the United States was in violation of its own voluntary commitments, while Iran simply failed to make that commitment in the first place.

⁷⁷ Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*.

Later, in the question of the enrichment of uranium, the problem was quite similar: There were no legal or other obligations that bound Iran not to enrich uranium, and the United States, of course, enriched its own uranium.

Sanctions or military action would not be symmetrical with Iran's noncooperation with respect to the non-proliferation treaty. A response in the form of military action would, in the logic of neo-liberal institutionalism, only be required as a reciprocal reaction to a military act. The problems related to indivisible collective goods such as non-proliferation is that reciprocity would be difficult to implement. This is due to the fact that the United States alone cannot end its commitments in policing the non-proliferation treaty in relation to North Korea, Iran, or, previously, to Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Thus, the whole idea of talking about reciprocity in relation to norms that are indivisible is inherently problematic. This limitation also applies to the claim that China is failing to contribute to the resolution of global problems on the basis of reciprocity.

That China's failure to respond against Syria, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea could actually facilitate and improve global governance is also due to the dubious consequences of interpreting problems of cooperation by using the prisoners' dilemma. Although there are three uncooperative outcomes that players might end up with in the prisoners' dilemma, there is just one cooperative outcome in the setting. Thus this model ignores issues of distribution in the analysis of cooperation with only one cooperative outcome. Consequently, it is not possible to imagine alternative terms of cooperation with different ways of distributing the benefits of such cooperation outcomes. This could be a serious problem for the analysis of cooperation and global governance – a problem that has analytical and also political consequences. What if Iran wanted to cooperate, but not on the basis of terms unilaterally defined by the United States? What if China, instead of free riding in the US-led system of global governance, was promoting its own path to global governance? What if global governance was not about intrusion into everything one cannot accept, but instead about silently working for a greater respect of equal sovereignty among nations, international legality, the

centrality of the UN, and international democracy? Any of the aforementioned cooperative scenarios would be considered free riding and would lead to uncooperative responses, if one modeled these interactions as prisoners' dilemmas.

It is easy to imagine the political consequences of interpreting global governance in terms of politics framed as prisoners' dilemma types of problems. Such an interpretation of global governance gives all the power to the one that sets the agenda and defines what is cooperative and what constitutes a failure to cooperate in world politics. What is even more alarming is the fact that the framing of global affairs as prisoners' dilemmas requires the global hegemon to react constantly to uncooperative behavior by reciprocating the perceived lack of cooperation with uncooperative moves. In cases where the hegemonic response cannot be of the same nature as the original "offense" (due to the indivisibility problem), reciprocity and maintenance of global order will have to entail various types of punishments meted out to countries and actors that do not comply with the prevailing hegemonic interpretation of rules and strategic necessities.

One way of looking at the successfulness of global governance from the point of view of security is to look at how many people die in conflicts and wars. I will use a battle deaths dataset produced at Uppsala University, Sweden,⁷⁸ which is based on a meta-analysis of media reporting in conflicts.⁷⁹ The Uppsala data are useful despite the fact that this source is accused of systematically underreporting the number of fatalities in conflicts. However, in this argument I am only interested in the relative share, which is unaffected by systematic underreporting of fatalities in conflicts that are motivated by global policing. In the figure below we can see that the costs of "reciprocation" and prisoners' dilemma framed-thinking have increased dramatically during the past decade. We can see that conflicts that are initiated by a US intervention with various coalitions of the willing or

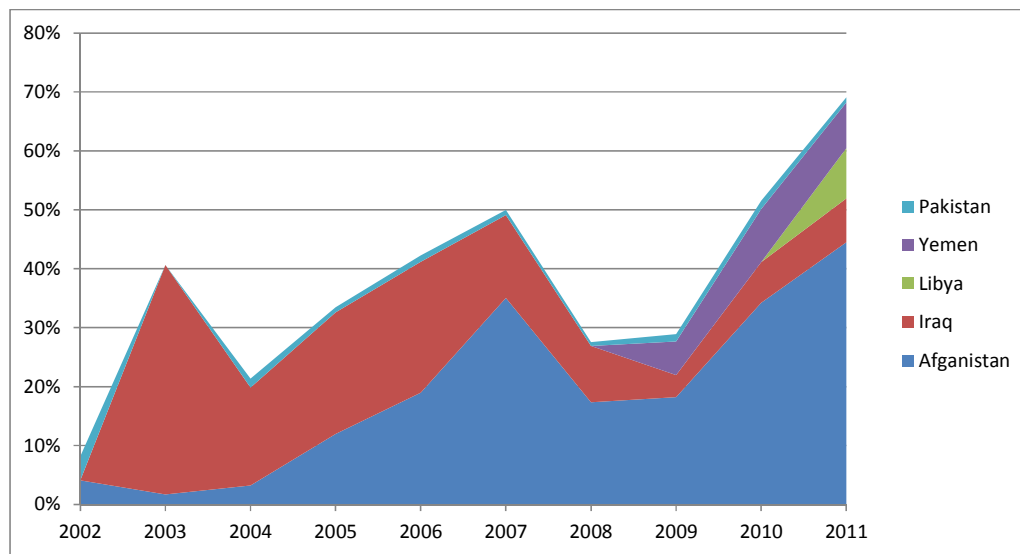
⁷⁸ UCDP, "Battle-Related Deaths Dataset v.5-2012, Uppsala Conflict Data Program, www.ucdp.uu.se, Uppsala University,," 2012.

⁷⁹ Ralf Sundberg, "Collective Violence 2002 - 2007: Global and Regional Trends,," in [Lis Harbom](#), Lotta and Ralph Sundberg, Eds., *States in Armed Conflict* (Uppsala: Universitetsstryckeriet, 2008).

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interventions using drones that constitute part of the global war on terror by the same coalitions now constitute up to 70% of all the fatalities of wars and conflicts in the world.

Figure: The Contribution of Violent “Global Governance” to Global War Fatalities



“Global governance,” which Shambaugh implicitly suggests is the only option for China to join in, could be considered the main global problem. According to Shambaugh, “When one examines a number of recent international challenges or crises: Sudan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan, Somalia but excluding North Korea – an aloof and unhelpful China is evident.⁸⁰” But the implication of the figure is that China is currently refusing to act in a way that would in fact only exacerbate some of the world’s main international problems. Thus, leading “coalitions of the unwilling” might actually not be such a bad strategy for China to pursue.

⁸⁰ Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, 46.

China's global approach does not entail that rogue states' actions should be responded to by equal degree of uncooperative attitude. Instead, China wants to focus on the discussion about what would constitute fair terms for any resolution. By using this approach, China could be on the right side of history. Although not willing to lead anti-American coalitions or punish the United States for its aggressions, China still raises the question about the rules of global democracy and the equal right of every country to its sovereignty. The focus of China's strategy is on the terms of peace and cooperation rather than on the assumption that just one set of cooperative strategies must be applied. A framing of global cooperation as a bargaining process about different terms of peace, or resolution, is a better and less biased way of contextualizing China's current global role.⁸¹

Conclusions

Assessment by major American academics about China's soft power strategy and contribution to global affairs has been damning: China has been seen as an incomplete power unable to justify its global role by means of soft power. This assessment has become rather dominant in the international academia and sometimes even in the media. However, this article has shown fundamental problems in the dominant view. China's success has been measured as if it aimed at the same goals as the United States and as if the world was similar to the one in which the United States raised in hegemonic prominence. However, China is not an incomplete power; it is an anti-hegemonic power. Thus its soft power needs are different from those of a hegemonic power. Furthermore, the world is not the same as it was during the Cold War. States no longer need to form alliances on the basis of cultural and political similarity. Instead, big powers of the present seek complementation and mutual gains. This article has shown how the different global context and how the different Chinese approach to hegemonism affect the way in which China's soft power and

⁸¹ John Harsanyi, "Approaches to Bargaining Problem Before and After the Theory of Games," *Econometrica* 24 (1956): 144–56; Timo Kivimäki, *US–Indonesian Hegemonic Bargaining: Strength of Weakness* (Adlershot: Ashgate, 2003); John Nash, "The Bargaining Problem," *Econometrica* 18 (1950): 155–62.

contribution to global affairs should be assessed. The American assessment of Chinese soft power and global role is misleading and should no longer be dominant.

If soft power is like a beauty contest, and if global governance can only be what the United States has practiced, China has failed miserably in both soft power and global governance. If hegemonic cycles are repeated in the same form, then China is not heading for world leadership. However, just as American leadership allowed more independent nation building in the developing world than European colonialism had, China too can aim at a different set of norms and objectives than those set down by American leadership. Political systems no longer compete between each other, and thus China does not need to demonstrate the superiority of its own political ideas. This is why China's soft power does not need to attract in the same way that U.S. soft power had to during the Cold War. Nor is the American concept of global governance the only way of showing responsibility on global issues. Instead, as shown above, it might very well be the irresponsible line that causes a majority of global suffering. Thus, China should not be measured by the American measuring stick, but should be allowed to forge its own way of peaceful development. As long as China is committed to its policies of anti-hegemonism, non-interference, and anti-militarism, China's soft power and contribution to global governance should not be seen as threatening or irresponsible.

China's anti-hegemonism is a contribution to global affairs it does not make Chinese power incomplete.

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